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THE
ART AND ARCHITECTURE
OF AIHOLE

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THE ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF AIHOLE

A STUDY OF EARLY CHALUKYAN ART THROUGH TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE

Foreword by

Niharranjan Ray, M.A., Ph.D.

Director, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla

With 140 *Half-tone Illustrations and* 17 *Ground-plans*

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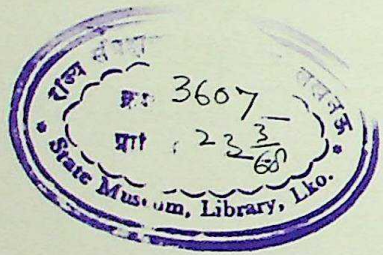

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In Grateful Memory
of
my beloved mother and father
whose unfailing love and devotion
have been a constant source
of
inspiration and challenge
to me
their life together
A thing of beauty and a joy for ever

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FOREWORD

I have great pleasure in introducing this monograph of Dr. R. S. Gupte. Dr. Gupte has already done a piece of remarkably good iconographical work on the Buddhist sculptures of Ellora. He is a careful and dependable scholar who takes infinite pains to ensure the authenticity of his statements and findings. Besides, he works on the basis of close local knowledge and on-the-spot examination of facts. This latest work of his on the Chalukya temples of Aihole is one more evidence of his patient and painstaking work in the field of Indian archaeology. Here is also one more example of what straight descriptive archaeology can achieve in respect of a particular group of temples and their sculptures, by way of elucidating the religious, iconographical and architectural complex of a given time and space. This monograph is, therefore, very welcome indeed.

The plan of the monograph is a simple one. Starting with a short unvarnished dynastic account of the Chalukyas the monograph divides itself into two well-defined parts, one devoted to a description of all the important temple-structures of Aihole, one by one, and another to an iconographic description and identification of all the important sculptures, also temple by temple. Adequate notice is taken simultaneously to trace also the stylistic evolution of the temple-forms and the iconographic evolution of the sculptural ones. To any student of Indian temple-architecture and iconography this monograph will provide a very useful and dependable guide in respect of a very important and significant centre of Indian art and culture.

Dr. Gupte takes some pains to show how and why the temples of Aihole are important and wherein lies their significance. To what extent his arguments are sustainable would be for the readers to judge. But none would be able to contest, I am sure, his claim that in the body of his text, sketches and illustrations, he has provided all the materials for enabling one to accept or reject what he says. Herein lies the integrity of a work of this nature.

NIHARRANJAN RAY

Director
Indian Institute of Advanced Study
Simla

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PREFACE

This monograph on the Art and Architecture of Aihole is the first of a projected three-volume history of the Art of the Chalukyas. It was undertaken as part of the research project of the Department of History and Ancient Culture of the Marathwada University.

At Aihole, Badami and Pattadkal, in the Bijapur District of Mysore, the Chalukyas of Badami built structural and rock-cut temples of great beauty. The hundred and odd temples of Aihole, the structural temples of Badami and Mahakutesvara, the rock-cut sanctuaries of Badami and the temples of Pattadkal stand as glorious monuments to the memory of the Western Chalukyas.

I am aware that I am not treading an entirely new ground. Scholars like Henry Cousens (*The Chalukyan Architecture of the Kanarese Districts*) and R. D. Banerjea (*Bas-reliefs of Badami*) have worked on the subject. Cousens, however, was working on a much larger canvas, whereas Banerjea concentrated his attention on the bas-reliefs of the rock-cut temples of Badami. In a sense, therefore, the present work does break new ground. It is the first exhaustive work which discusses the architecture and sculptures of Aihole. I am grateful to the Marathwada University for providing me this opportunity.

I owe a debt of gratitude to many people for many things. Dr. Niharranjan Ray, Director, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, very kindly agreed to write the Foreword. My thanks are due to him. Dr. N. R. Tawde, Vice-Chancellor of the University, always gave encouragement by taking interest in my work. I can never thank Mr. M. B. Chitnis, the Registrar of the university enough. He has been a constant source of encouragement.

Mr. N. A. Gore, the Librarian and Mr. R. G. Jogdeo, Assistant Librarian of the university have always been very helpful. My special thanks are due to two persons in the Department of History who have laboured much for me. One is Mr. P. L. Barwal, steno-typist of the Department, and the other is Mr. S. K. Pande, photographer-cum-artist of the Department.

My colleagues and students from Winston-Salem have also rendered me much assistance. My Wake Forest friends, Dr. Carl Harris and Prof. Lewis Aycock, helped me with the proofs at a crucial stage. Dr. R. J. Mehta of D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Private Ltd. is always very helpful in this matter. I must particularly thank three of my students of the senior class at Salem College, Miss Linda Lundin, Miss Fay Jackson and Miss Bonnie Ayres for spending hours preparing the Index. My thanks are also due to my wife Dr. Nalini Gupte who has always been a source of inspiration to me.

Wake Forest College,
Winston-Salem,
North Carolina, U.S.A.

R. S. Gupte

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Part I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

THE CHALUKYAS OF BADAMI

The Chālukyas of Bādāmi, during whose reign were built temples at Aihole, Bādāmi and Paṭṭadkal, ruled in the territory comprising parts of the Kanarese and Maharashtra regions, from A.D. 535 to 757, when they were superseded by the Rashṭrakūṭas of Mālkhed in the hegemony of the Deccan.

Inscriptions

In their earliest inscriptions, the Chālukyas call themselves Chalkya, Chalikya or Chalukya. They were an indigenous Kanarese family, with Kanarese as their mother-tongue. The theory which seeks to identify them with the Sogdians is now discredited.

The dated Bādāmi inscription (A.D. 578) of Maṅgaleśa refers to the Chālukyas as 'meditating at the feet of the sacred Svāmi Mahāsena,' i.e., Kārttikeya, the son of Śiva, and as being Hārītīputras of the Mānavya *gotra*, who had become purified by the performance of the *Agnishṭoma*, *Agnichayana*, *Vājapeya*, *Pauṇḍarīka*, Aśvamedha ceremonies, etc. It may be noted that the Kadambas and Chutus also claimed to be Hārītīputras belonging to the Mānavya *gotra*. In the Hyderabad grant (A.D. 612) of Pulakeśin II, the Chālukyas are said to have been nourished by the Seven Mothers (the Sapta-Mātṛikas); as those who attained continuous prosperity owing to the protection of Kārttikeya; and to whom all kings submit at the sight of their *varāha-lāñchhana* (boar-crest), acquired through the favour of Nārāyaṇa.

From the beginning, the Chālukyas offered worship both to Vaishṇavite and Śaivite deities, as their early inscriptions indicate. While their boar-crest indicated their Vaishṇava affiliation, the worship offered to Kārttikeya, the son of Śiva, and the Sapta-Mātṛikas indicated their Śaivite leanings. All their early temples, however, are dedicated to Vishṇu. They seem to have become Śaivites later on.

Early kings

The earliest kings of the Chālukya family are Jayasiṁha and his son Raṇarāga who ruled in the first half of the 6th century A.D. They

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are first mentioned in the Mahākuṭa pillar inscription of A.D. 602. This early record, however, does not credit them with any conquest. They were probably still feudatories at that time. The later claim made in the Kauthem grant of A.D. 1009, which credits Jayasiṁha with the defeat of king Indra of the Rāshṭrakūṭa dynasty, need not be taken seriously, since no early record makes mention of this achievement.

Pulakesin I (A.D. 535-566)

The real founder of the dynasty seems to have been Pulakeśin I. He enjoyed the titles of Satyāśraya and Raṇavikrama. He was also known as Śrī-Pṛithvī-Vallabha (the Lord of the Earth). He is identified with the Chālukya-Vallabheśvara of the Bādāmi inscription of Śaka 465 (A.D. 543-4). He conquered Vātāpī, built a fort there and performed the Aśvamedha. At Bādāmi and Aihole, which may have been their earlier capital, the early Chālukyas built a large number of temples. The fort of Vātāpī stands on a natural eminence, and is close to the Malaprabhā (mud-shining) or Malaparī (mud-rubbing) river which flows into Bādāmi, originating twenty-two miles south-west of Belgaum. It enters Bādāmi about three miles south of Mutkavi. In a way, it forms the southern boundary of the Bādāmi district. About ten miles away from Bādāmi is Paṭṭadkal, on the bank of the same river. Further away, eight miles down in Hungund, is Aihole. Here, since it is sandstone territory, the bed of the river is white sand and the water a lovely blue. It is in this triangular area, formed by the three cities of Aihole, Bādāmi and Paṭṭadkal, that all the early temples of the Chālukyas were built in the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries. Pulakeśin I performed many sacrifices, such as, the *Hiraṇyagarbha*, the *Agnishṭoma*, *Agnichayana*, *Vājapeya*, *Bahusuvarṇa* and *Pauṇḍarīka*. The Nerur grant of Maṅgaleśa praises him for his great wisdom, his knowledge of the laws of Manu and of the epics the *Ramāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. He married Durlabhadevī of the Batpura family. He had two sons Kīrtivarman and Maṅgaleśa. Both of them ruled successively.

Kirtivarman I (A.D. 566-597)

The Aihole inscription of his son Pulakeśin II refers to him as 'the first maker of Vātāpī,' and the 'night of death to the Nalas, Mauryas and Kadambas.' The 'maker of Vātāpī' must have adorned that city with many temples. His activities were not confined to Vātāpī alone. A number of temples were built at Aihole during his reign of thirty years. While the Aihole *Praśasti* of Ravikīrti credits Kīrtivarman, with the conquest of only the Nalas, the Mauryas and the Kadambas, the Mahākuṭa inscription (A.D. 602) of his brother Maṅgaleśa credits him with the subjugation of the hostile rulers of Vaṅga, Aṅga, Kaliṅga, Vaṭṭūra (?),

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Magadha, Madraka, Kerala, Gaṅga, Mūṣhaka, Pāṇḍya, Dramila, Coliya, Āluka, Vaijayantī, etc. The Mahākūṭa inscription further tells us that a beautiful cave-temple dedicated to Vishṇu was built by his younger brother Maṅgaleśa on his orders. Kīrtivarman married a sister of Rājā Śrī-Vallabha Sennanda of the Sendraka family, who were feudatories of the Kadambas. After the defeat of the latter, this part of the country came under the control of the Chālukyas. During the reign of Kīrtivarman, Chālukya hegemony spread over southern Maharashtra, and to parts of Mysore and Madras.

Mangalesa (A.D. 597-610)

Kīrtivarman I was succeeded to the throne not by his son, but by his brother Maṅgaleśa. He is described as a 'Paramabhāgavata' (a devout worshipper of Vishṇu). His greatest victories were those against the Kalachuris and the Revatīdvīpa. The Mahākūṭa pillar inscription refers to this event in very poetic terms. 'The cavalry of Maṅgaleśa raised canopies of dust on the shores of the eastern and western ocean.' The inscription tells us of the intention of Maṅgaleśa to conquer the northern quarter of the country. In pursuance of this aim, he attacked the Kalatsuris and seized all their wealth, which was used for the 'idol-procession' of the god Makuṭeśvara. Here at Mahākuṭa, he erected a pillar of religion to mark his victory over the Kalachuris. From the inscription of Pulakeśin II, it is obvious that the Kalachuris were not completely vanquished and that this part of the country had to be reconquered by him. The Aihole *Praśasti* also refers to his conquest of Revatīdvīpa in very eulogistic terms.

Maṅgaleśa was a great builder. His inscription dated A.D. 578, inscribed in Cave No. 3 at Bādāmi, is proof of this. The other temple he built was the one at Mahākūṭa, dedicated to Makuṭeśvara, i.e., Śiva. This shows that he worshipped both Vishṇu and Śiva. It is obvious that some of the temples at Aihole must have been built during his reign.

Maṅgaleśa had a short reign of thirteen years. The closing part of his reign involved him in a war with his nephew Pulakeśin II, the son of his elder brother Kīrtivarman, the rightful successor to the throne. Maṅgaleśa tried to secure the succession for his own son. In the civil war that followed, Maṅgaleśa was killed and Pulakeśin II succeeded to the throne.

Pulakesin II (A.D. 610-642)

Pulakeśin II was one of the ablest and most powerful kings of the Chālukya dynasty. He came to the throne only after a bloody civil war that brought in its wake a period of anarchy and confusion. 'The whole world was enveloped in the darkness that was the enemies,' says the Aihole *Praśasti*. Pulakeśin II controlled just Vātāpī and no other

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territory when he came to the throne. He was surrounded by enemies on all sides and faced imminent danger from Āppākiya and Govinda, two kings who threatened the heart of his kingdom. He won over Govinda and repulsed Āppākiya. After making his home province safe, he launched on a career of conquest, first capturing Vanavāsī, the Kadamba capital. Then came the turn of the Gaṅgas and the Āḷūpas of Mysore. He defeated the Mauryas of Konkan and occupied Purī (Ghārāpurī). He also subjugated the Lāṭas, the Mālavas and the Gurjaras. A Chālukya viceroy was appointed to govern the Gujarat region. Pulakeśin's greatest triumph was, however, over Harṣha, the renowned '*Sakala-Uttarādhipati*,' the Lord of the North. This event took place probably between A.D. 630 and 634. This event cannot be dated earlier than A.D. 630, as even the Lohner grant of Pulakeśin II, dated A.D. 630, makes no mention of this great achievement. All these conquests made Pulakeśin II 'Lord of the three Mahārāshṭrakas,' comprising 99,000 villages. The Chālukyan kingdom was known to Yuan Chwang as Mahārāshṭra. From the north, Pulakeśin II turned his attention to the south. He first subjugated Dakshiṇā-Kosala and then captured Piṣhṭapuram in the Godāvari District. At Piṣhṭapuram he installed his younger brother Yuvarāja Kubja Vishṇuvardhana. The eastern Chālukyan dynasty, which he established, ruled till the year A.D. 1070, when it merged with the Chola royal family. Pulakeśin II now started a war which was to bring him to utter ruin. This was the war with the Pallavas of Kāñchīpuram, a struggle which was to become a family feud carried on with great vigour by both sides. Pulakeśin II attacked the Pallava King Mahendravarman I and defeated him but he was to pay dearly for this. He then went down further south and made friends with the Cholas, Keralas and Pāṇḍayas. He then returned to Vātāpi. The Lohner grant rightly describes him as the 'Lord of the Eastern and Western Waters.'

Persian Embassy

After his great '*digvijaya*,' Pulakeśin II sent an embassy to the court of the Persian King Khusrau II in A.D. 625-6. This fact is recorded by the Persian historian Tabari. There is, however, no record of a reciprocate embassy. A painting in Cave No. 1 of Ajanta is supposed to represent this Persian embassy. Another painting in the same Cave is presumed to represent Khusrau and his beautiful wife Shirin.

Pulakeśin II's first conflict with the Pallavas was not very satisfying. He had failed to take Kāñchī. He was, therefore, keen on waging another struggle with the Pallavas. In the Pallava country, Mahendravarman I had been succeeded by Narasiṁhavarman I, a more powerful and determined ruler. He was keen on avenging the defeat

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of his father. When, therefore, Pulakeśin II launched an attack on the Pallava country, he was faced by a determined enemy. In successive campaigns, at Pariyala, Maṇimaṅgala and Śūramāra, Narasiṁhavarman inflicted crushing defeats upon his powerful and renowned adversary and humbled him. This great set-back crippled the mighty Chālukya king. Pulakeśin II returned in humiliation to his dominions. It was at about this time that the Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang entered the dominions of the Chālukya king. The great Pulakeśin II, who was so well served by his stout-hearted and brave soldiers as Yuan tells us, however, was so much weakened by the time Narasiṁhavarman invaded his territory, that he could not offer any effective resistance. The result was that Vātāpī fell to the Pallava king, Pulakeśin II losing his life in the ensuing encounter. The Pallava inscription on the Mallikārjuna temple at Bādāmi attests to its occupation by the Pallava king.

Vikramaditya I (A.D. 655-81)

This great Pallava victory crippled the Chālukyas. The central authority ceased to exist. In the absence of any central authority, there was complete confusion and anarchy in the country. Bādāmi and the surrounding regions remained under Pallava occupation for many years and for nearly thirteen to fourteen years after the death of Pulakeśin II, the Chālukya throne remained unoccupied. In the meanwhile several claimants sought to capture the throne. Finally, Vikramāditya I, with the assistance of the Gaṅga King Durvinīta, succeeded to the throne after driving out the Pallava from the capital Vātāpī. His attempts, however, to destroy the Pallava power were not very successful. The claims made in the Hyderabad grant and the Gadavāl plates are somewhat exaggerated. The latter plates credit Vikramāditya I with having 'crushed the glory of Narasiṁha, caused the dissolution of the valour of Mahendra and subdued Iśvara.' Vikramāditya seems to have won some notable successes against Narasiṁhavarman, who had a short and uneventful reign. His greatest victory was, however, the defeat of Parmeśvaravarman and the capture of Kāñchī. This victory, was, however, short-lived, for the Pallava king soon gathered his forces, and defeated the Chālukya king in the battle of Peruvalanallur, and forced him to retreat to his own dominions.

Vikramāditya was ably assisted by his son Vinayāditya and his grandson Vijayāditya. Son and grandson joined together to beat back the Pallava army that had entered the Chālukya dominions and Vinayāditya established peace and order in the dominions.

It was during Vikramāditya's reign that his younger brother Dharāśraya Jayasiṁhavarman was appointed Viceroy of the Gujarat

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region, with his capital at Navasārikā (Navasari). He established himself firmly in the saddle by vanquishing King Vajjaḍa, probably of the Maitraka dynasty of Vallabhi. He also helped his brother against the Pallavas.

Vinayaditya (A.D. 681-96)

In his own inscriptions as well as that of his son, Vinayāditya is depicted as a great warrior and conqueror. He is said to have reduced to servitude the Pallavas, Kalabhras, Keralas, Haihayas, Vilas, Malvas, Cholas and the Pāṇḍyas. The claim obviously seems exaggerated. Similar claims are made in his Rayagad plates of A.D. 703 (EI, X, 14). In these plates, he is said to have collected tribute from Pārasīka (Persia) and Simhala (Ceylon). This would only imply that some Ceylonese and Persian refugees were given asylum in his court. The Rayagad plates, however, also refer to his successful northern expedition, in which his son Vijayāditya played an important part. In this expedition, he fought 'the Lord of the entire Uttarapatha,' defeated him, and seized the Gaṇgā and Yamūnā Pālidhvaja, besides other emblems of sovereignty. This king whom Vinayāditya and his son defeated may have been King Yasovarman, the powerful ruler of Malwa, as suggested by some scholars.

Vijayaditya I (A.D. 696-733)

Vijayāditya I enjoyed the longest reign, a reign of peace and prosperity. The newly discovered Ulchala stone inscription (*Ancient India*, No. 5, p. 54) mentions the first expedition of his son Yuvarāja Vikramāditya against Kāñchī, in the 35th year of his reign, i.e., A.D. 730-31. This was obviously the first of the three expeditions undertaken by Vikramāditya. Vijayāditya was probably the first king to build a temple at Paṭṭadkal. This was significantly dedicated to Śiva and was named Vijayeśvara. It is now known as Saṅgameśvara. Kīrtivarman II's inscription on a pillar here praises the 'Saṅgama' (union) of Hara and Gaurī. After this the temple came to be known as Saṅgameśvara. An interesting undated inscription of Vijayāditya's reign, from the temple of Mahākūṭa, records the 'Hiraṇyagarbhadāna' performed by Vināpoṭigal, the 'soul's darling' of Vijayāditya. 'Two spurious grants (Keilhorn's list Nos. 26, 37) represent a Jain teacher as the priest of the king's father, suggesting that Vinayāditya was a follower of Jainism.' His younger sister was probably a Jain since she is credited with the construction of the Jain temple of Anesejjeya-basadi at Lakshmeśwara.

Vikramaditya II (A.D. 733-744).

Vikramāditya II succeeded to the throne of his father in A.D. 733-34. At the beginning of his reign, the northern part of the empire in Gujarat was threatened by an invasion of the Tājīkas or Arabs. But the viceroy

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of that region, Jayāśraya Maṅgalarāja, proved himself a match for them. When the invading Tājīkas, after capturing 'Saindhava, Kachehella, Saurāshṭra, Chavotaka, Maurya and Gurjara' kings tried to seize the Navasari district, they were forcibly repulsed by Maṅgalarāja. For this achievement, he was given such titles as 'Anivartaka-nivartayitṛi' and 'Dakshiṇāpatha-svadhārana.'

This great victory of his viceroy encouraged Vikramāditya to perform similar acts of valour. Whom could he attack but the 'natural enemy' of his House? He suddenly invaded the Tuṇḍdaka, i.e., the Pallava country, attacked and defeated the Pallava king Nandipotavarman and seized from him the martial musical instruments called *Kaṭumukhavāditra* and *Samudra-ghosha* as well as the *Khaṭvāṅga* banner. A reference to this is made in the Virūpāksha inscription of the same king on one of the pillars of the Rājasiṁheśvara (Kailasanath) temple at Kāñchīpuram, which confirms this victory. Vikramāditya also conquered the Pāṇḍya, Chola, Kerala, Kaḷabhra and other kings and erected a Jayastambha on the Southern Ocean to mark his great victory.

This was followed by a second invasion of the Pallava country by Kīrtivarman II, son of Vikramāditya. The Pallava monarch Nandivarman took to flight and sought refuge behind the walls of the fort. Kīrtivarman returned home with a rich booty.

Vikramāditya married two sisters belonging to the Kalachuri house. Both of them built beautiful temples dedicated to Śiva at Paṭṭaḍkal. This is not surprising since the Kalachuris were devout worshippers of Śiva. The magnificent temple of Lokeśvara, now known as Virupāksha, was built by Queen Lokamahādevī. The inscription of the temple tells us that the temple was built by the Pallava architect Śrī Guṇḍan Anivāritāchārya, upon whom many titles were conferred. He was named 'Tribhuvanāchārya.' The temple was richly endowed by the queen. The younger sister of the chief queen, Rājñī Trailokyamahādevī constructed another temple dedicated to Śiva, called Trailokyeśvara. K. A. Nilkanta Sastri says that the temple is no longer in existence (See *The Early History of the Deccan*, Vols. I-VI, p. 229). Cousens not only identifies it with Mallikārjuna (p. 66), but further suggests that the male and female figures of Fig. 18 on p. 66 of his *Chālukyan Architecture*, represent the King and the Queen.

Kirtivarman II (A.D. 744-757)

Kīrtivarman was the last king of the early Chālukya dynasty of Bādāmi. He was defeated by the Rāshṭrakūṭa Dantidurga, who, in the Ellora grant of A.D. 742, is described merely as *Mahāsāmantādhipati*. By A.D. 754, however, his position had changed for his Samangad

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plates coming from the Kolhapur country refer to his acquiring complete sovereignty over the Chālukya Vallabha. Dantidurga now called himself 'Mahārājādhirāja,' 'Parameśvara' and 'Paramabhaṭṭāraka.' He is also referred to as the conqueror of the mighty Karnataka army. Dantidurga first subdued the Gurjaras, the Kosalas and the Kaliṅgas. He also overwhelmed the Pallavas of Kāñchī and formed an alliance with them. Having isolated Kīrtivarman, he attacked and defeated him. The latter tried to retrieve the fallen fortunes of his House after the death of Dantidurga; but the successor of Dantidurga proved very formidable and he was overthrown by the Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa I who 'forcibly carried away the fortune of the Chālukya family' and transformed 'the great boar (the Varāha-lāñchhana of the Chālukyas) which had been seized with an itching for battle, and attacked him, into a deer.'

Thus the great dynasty of the Chālukyas, which ruled from the Tapti to the Godāvarī and the Krishṇā and had financed a great architectural movement disappeared from the pages of history for a period of two centuries, when it again rose like a phoenix from the ashes of the Rāshṭrakūṭa empire in the tenth century A.D.

THE HISTORY OF AIHOLE

General

Aihole, long. 75° 57′ lat. 16° 50′, is situated in the Bādāmi *taluka* of the Bijapur District of Mysore State. Known in old inscriptions as Aryapura and Ayyavole, it was probably the earliest capital of the Chālukyas. Along with Bādāmi (ancient Vātāpī) and Paṭṭadkal (ancient Patta-Kisuvolal), it was their earliest and most important city. The capital was shifted to Vātāpī only in the time of the great founder of the dynasty, Pulakeśin I. The choice of Vātāpī was dictated by strategic considerations. It stood on a high eminence that made it suitable for defence. Just three miles away from Vātāpī flows the river Malaprabhā. The fort of Vātāpī looks down upon the picturesque countryside below and the beautiful Bhūtanātha tank. Among the hills to the east is the famous shrine of Mahākuṭeśvaranātha, made sacred by the sage Agastya who lived there; five miles further down in the eastern direction and on the same river Malaprabhā stands the temple town of Paṭṭadkal, where the later Chālukyas continued their art activities in the seventh and eighth centuries. Further down on the same river, some eight miles away, is the village of Aihole that witnessed the earliest art activity of the Western Chālukyas.

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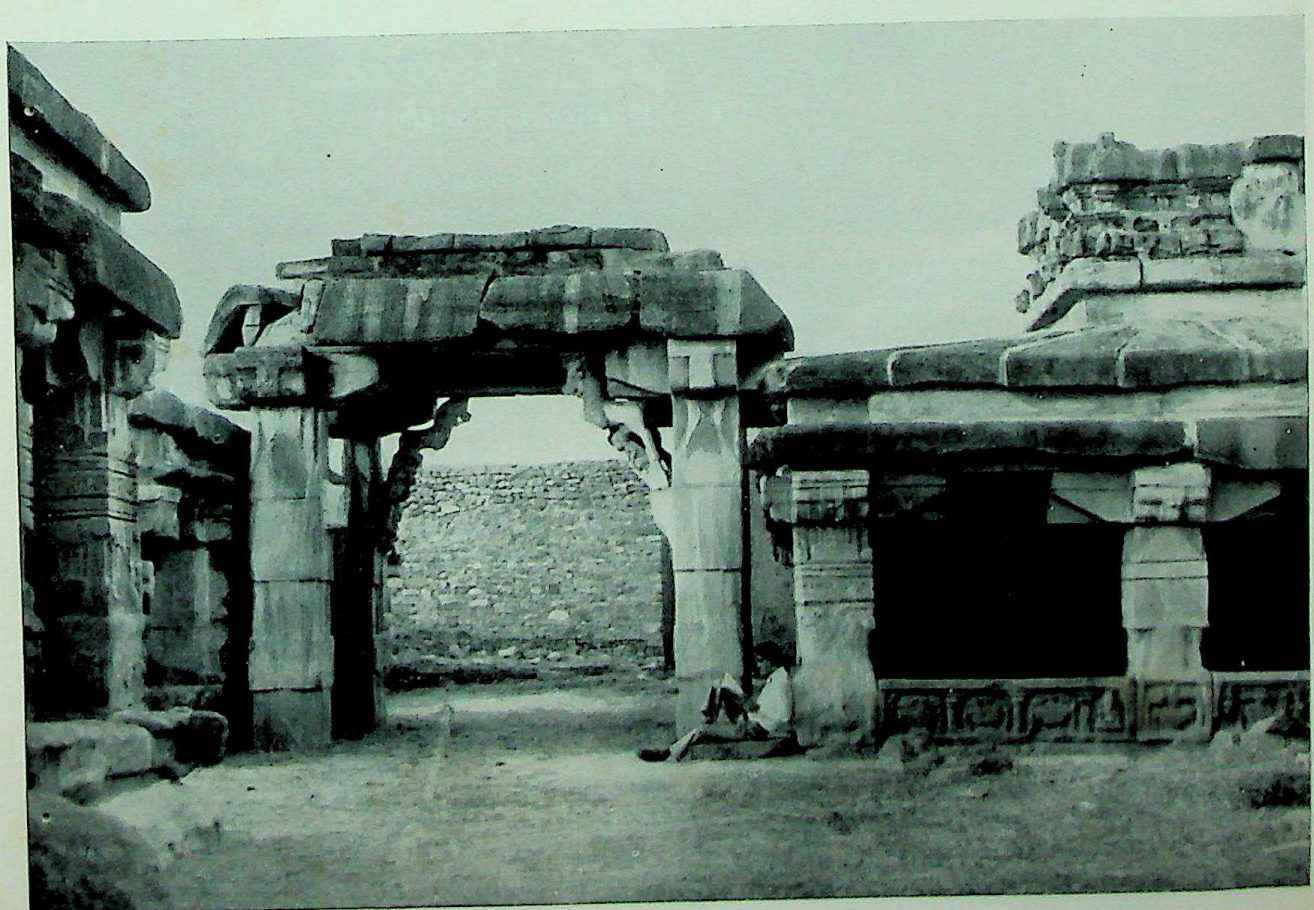
1. Konti gudī and porch, facing east and west.



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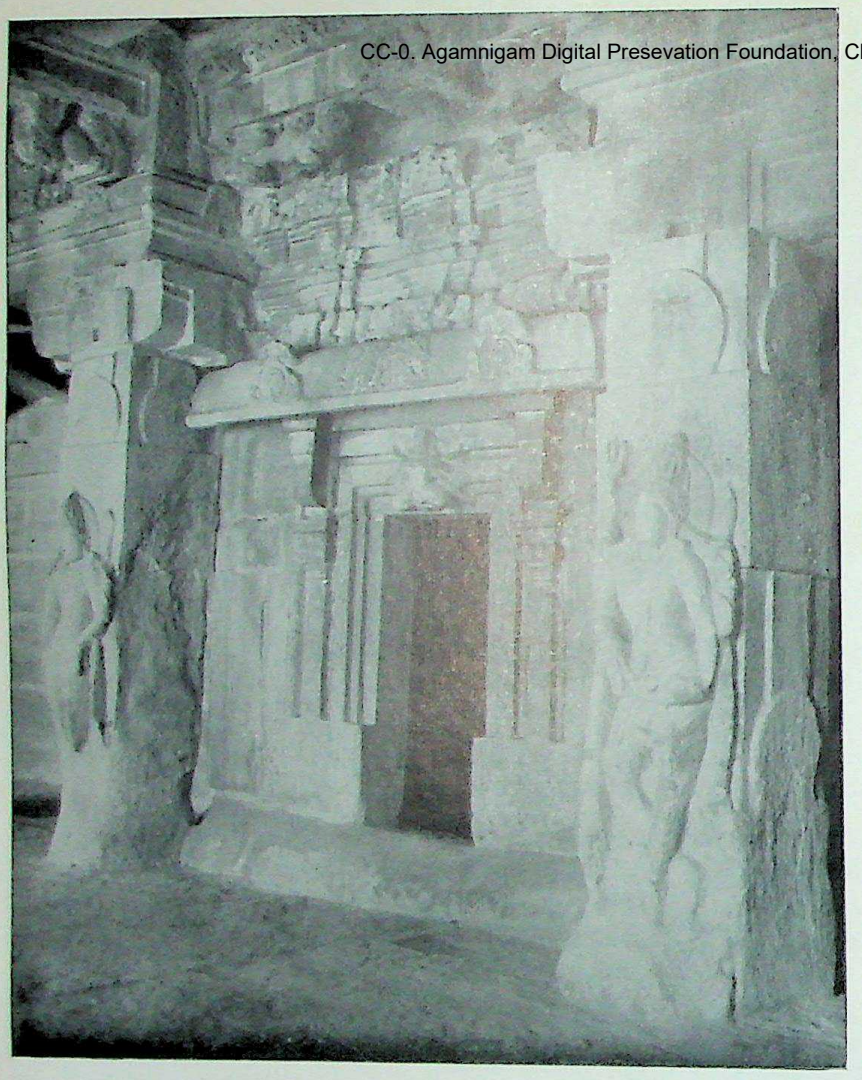

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2. Konti-gudī, facing east. Shrine door details.
3. Konti-gudī. Bracket of porch.

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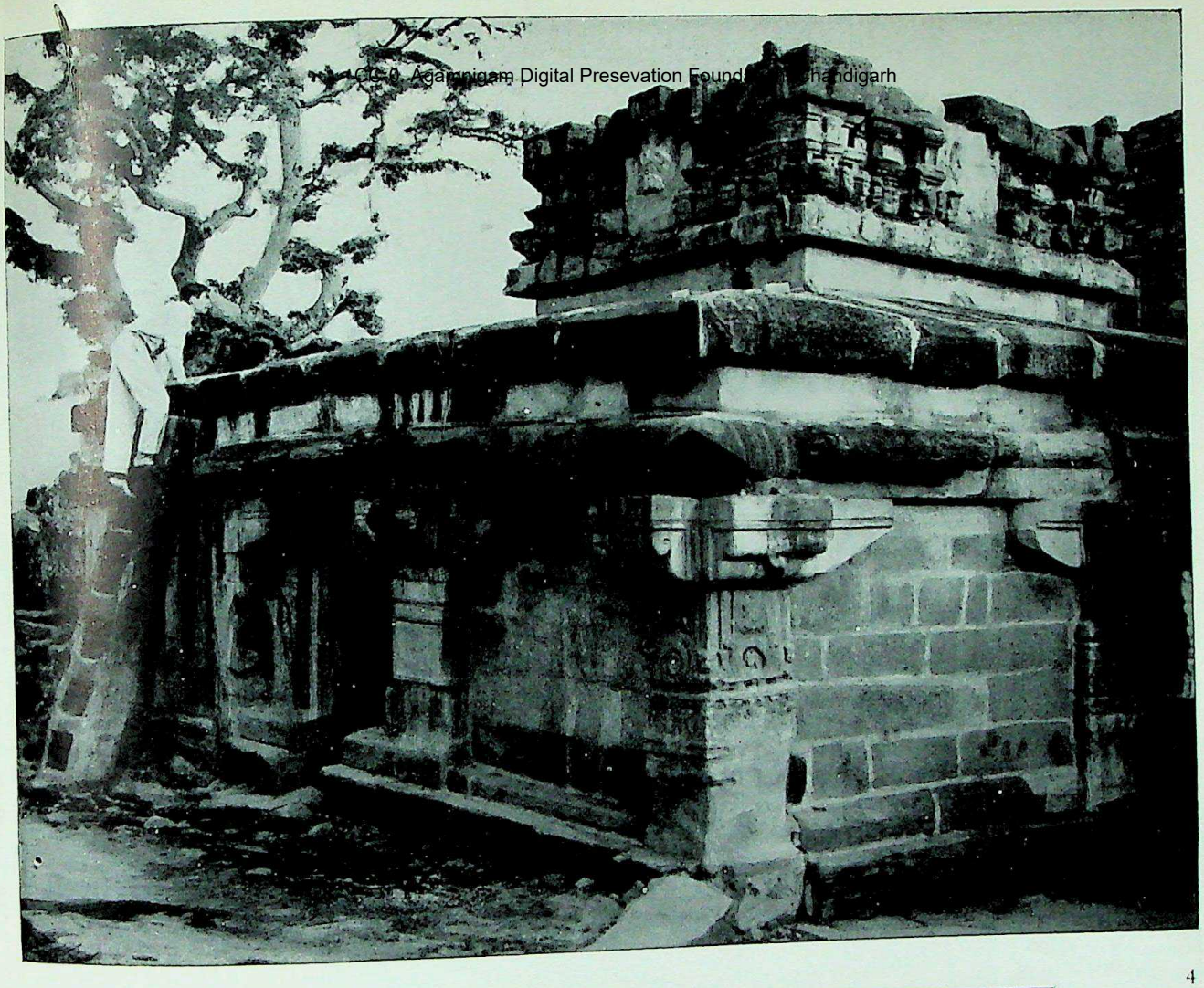

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4. General view of Konti-gudī.
5. Konti-gudī, facing west. Shrine door details.

5

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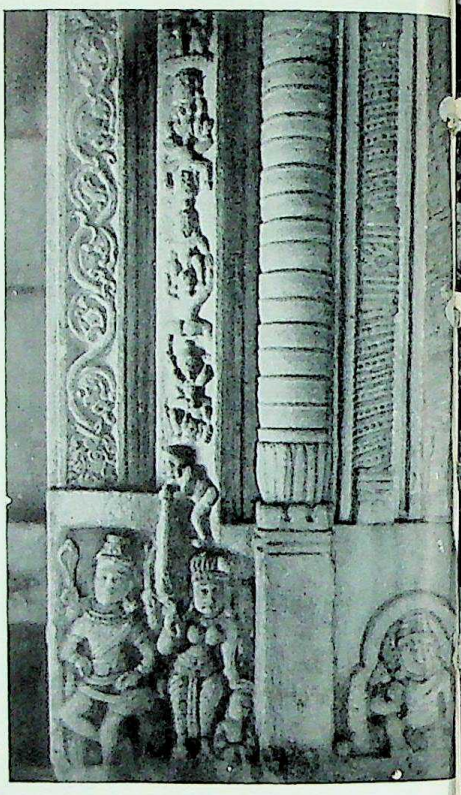
7. Temple adjoining Konti-gudī. Shrine door.
8. Temple adjoining Konti-gudī, facing east. Details of shrine door.

7



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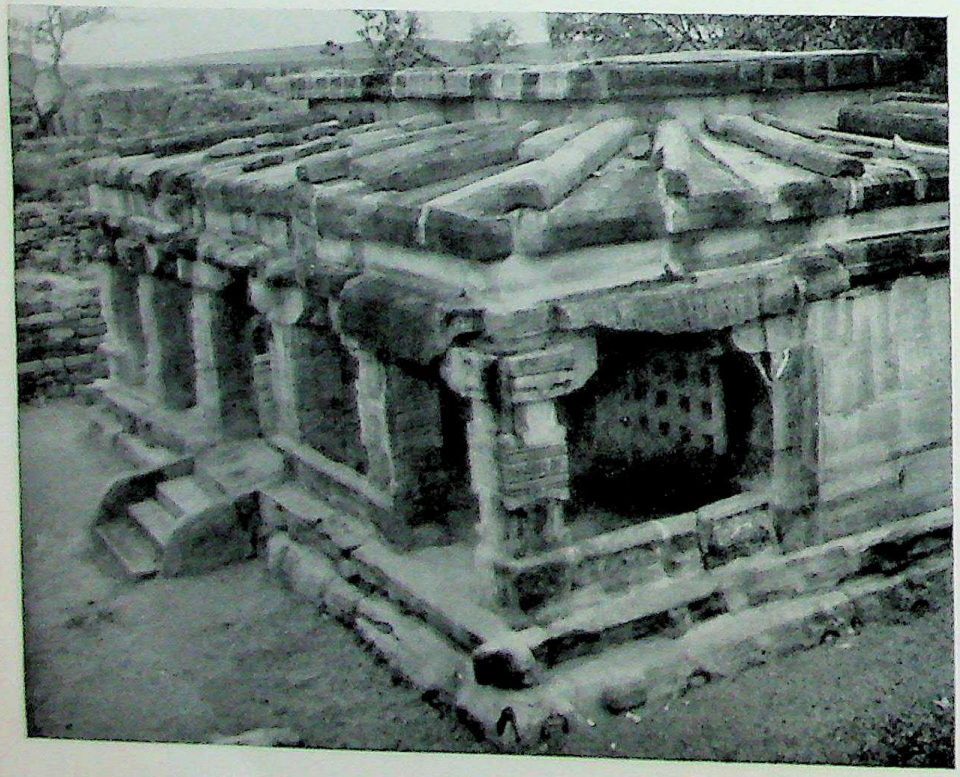

6. Temple adjoining Konti-gudī, facing east.

6

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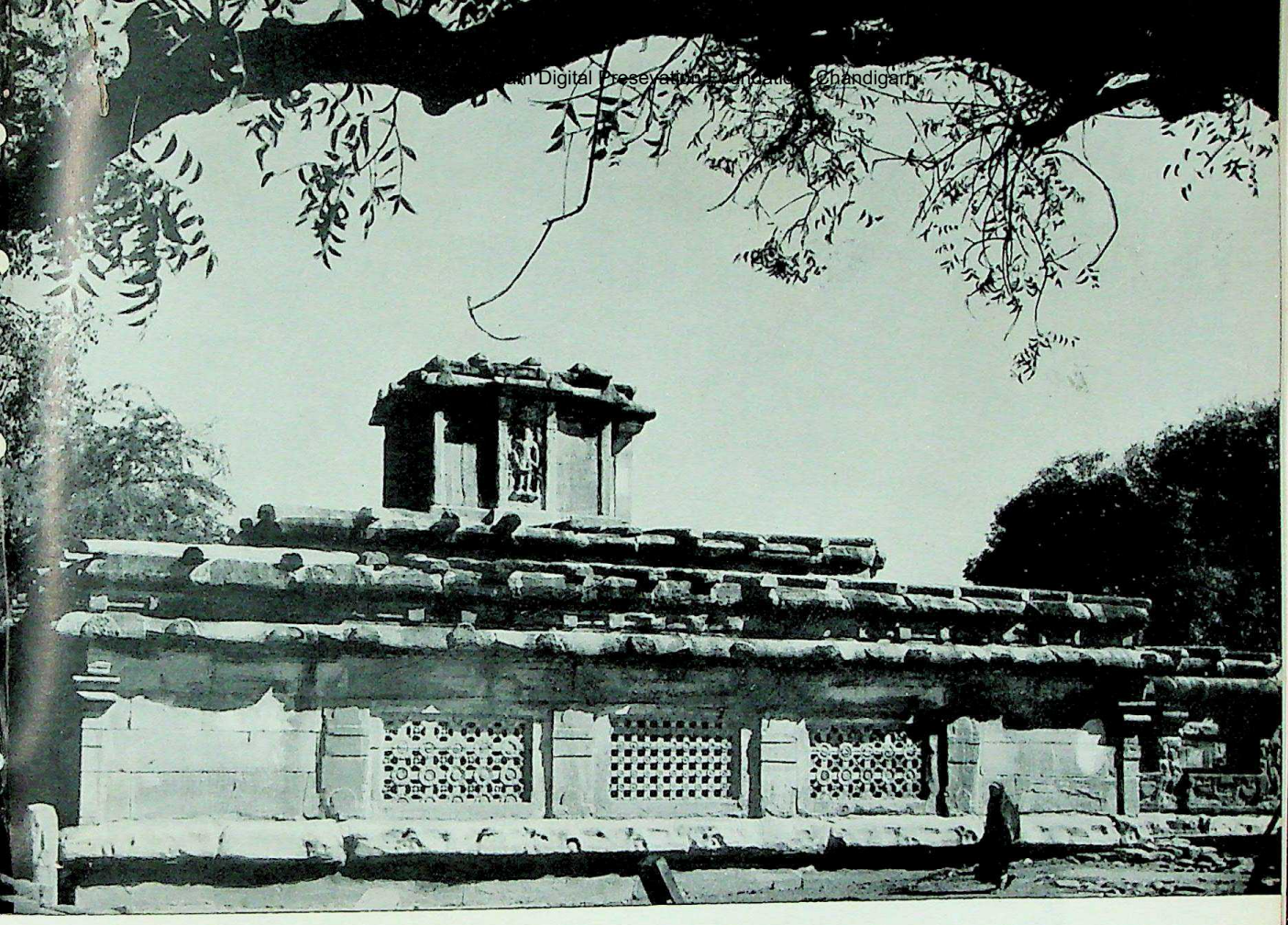

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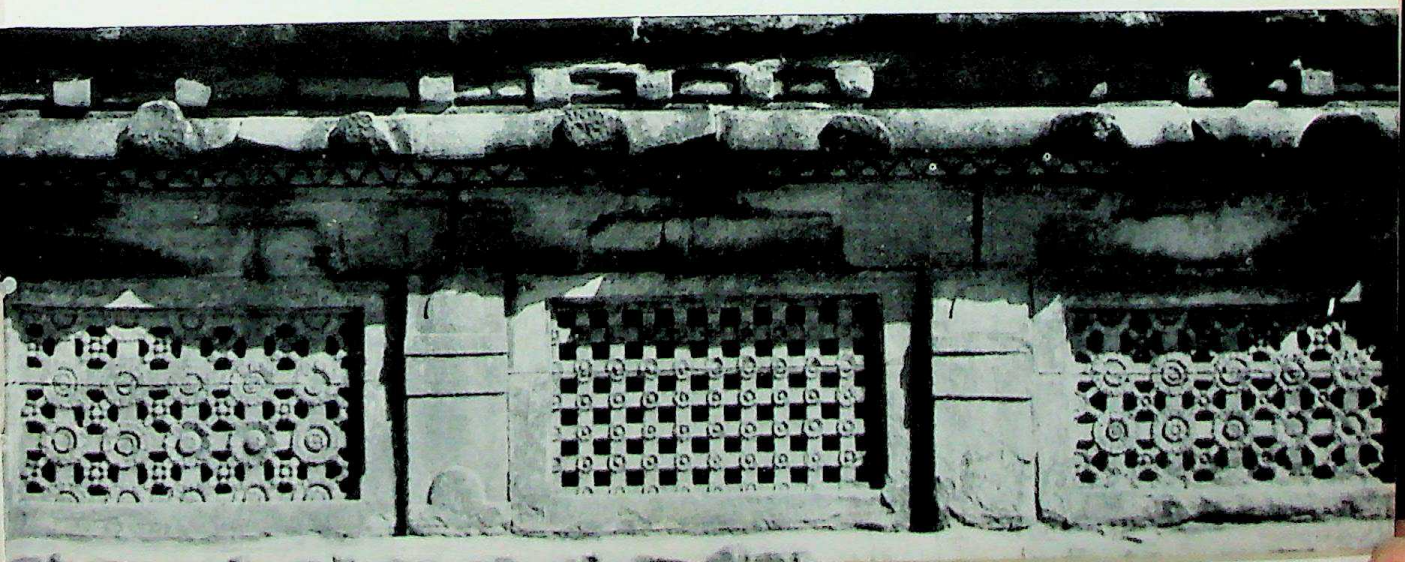
9. General view of Lad Khan.
10. Lad Khan temple. Details of windows.

10



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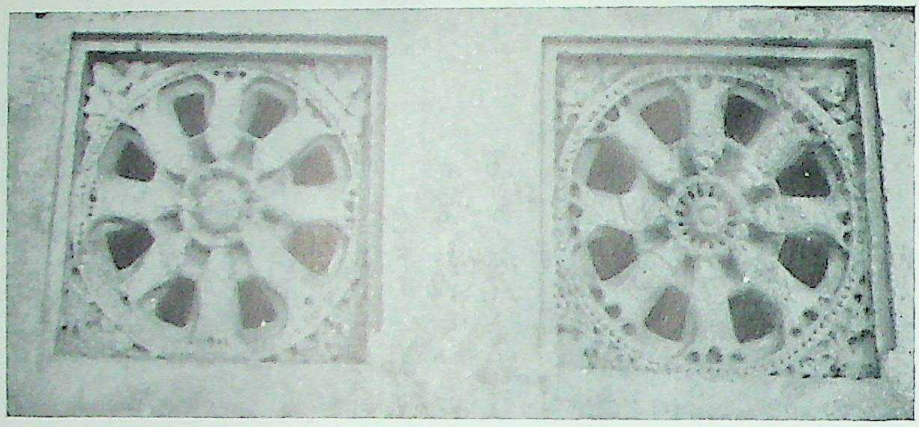

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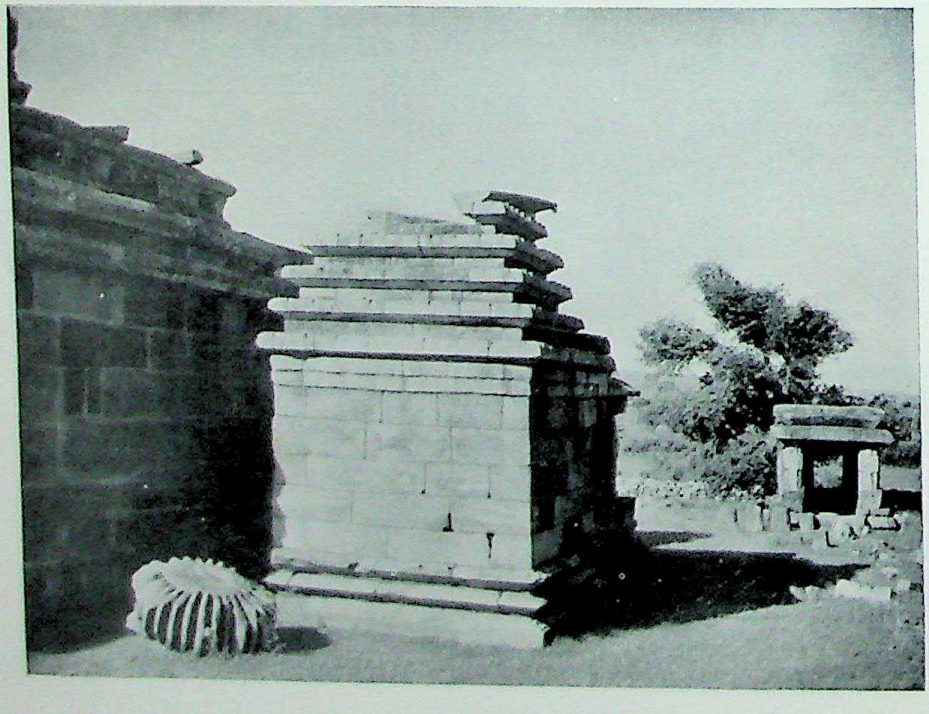
11. Lad Khan temple. Fish-pattern windows.
12. General back view of the group of temples adjoining and in front of Huchch malli-gudī.



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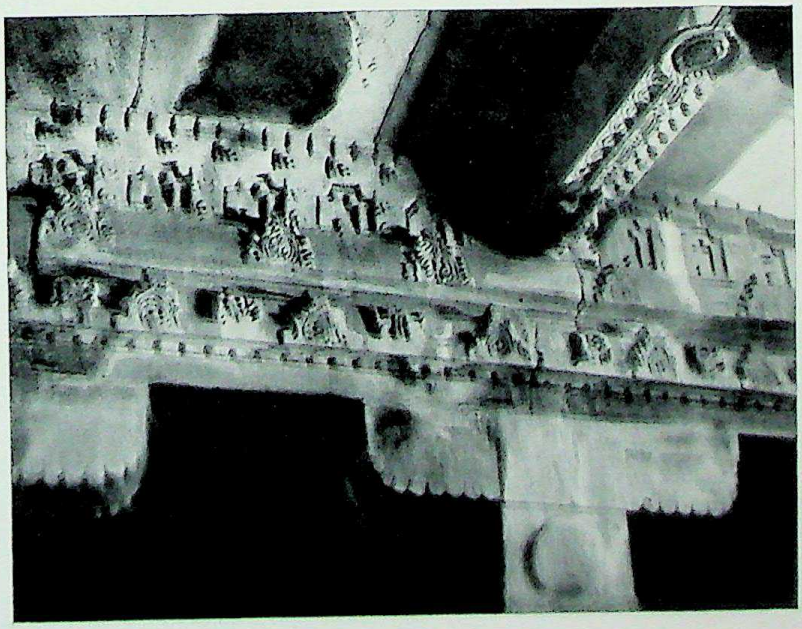
13. Tārabasappā temple. General view.
14. Tārabasappā temple. Details of interior.



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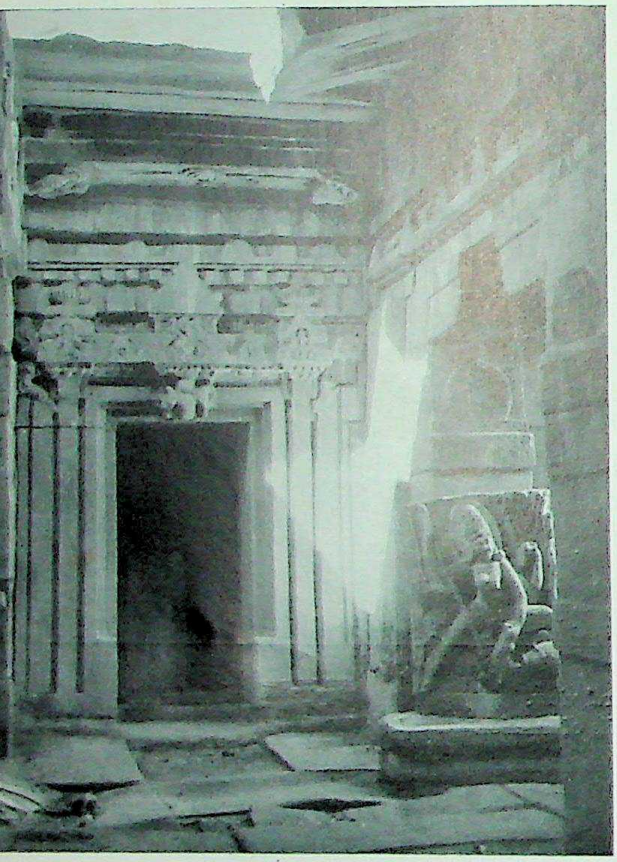

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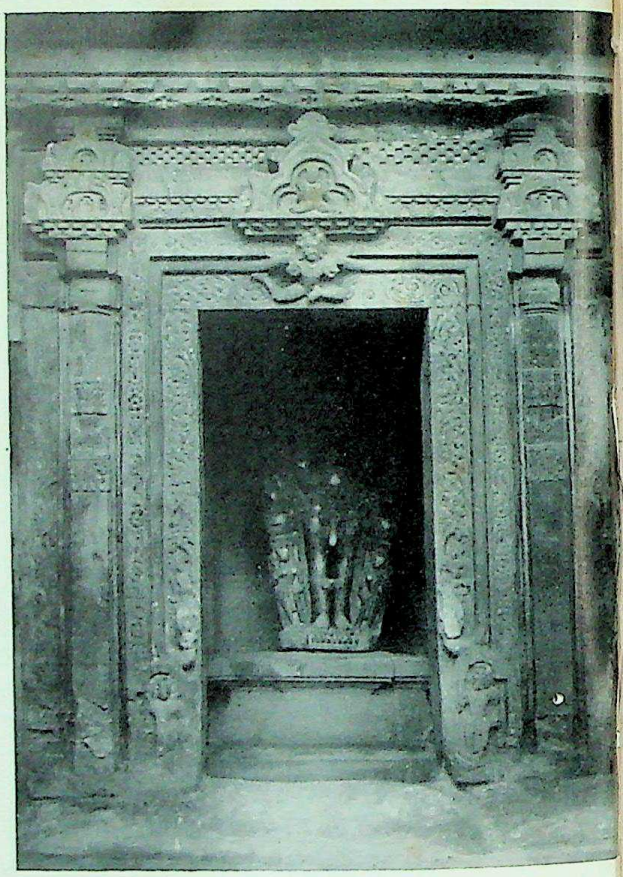

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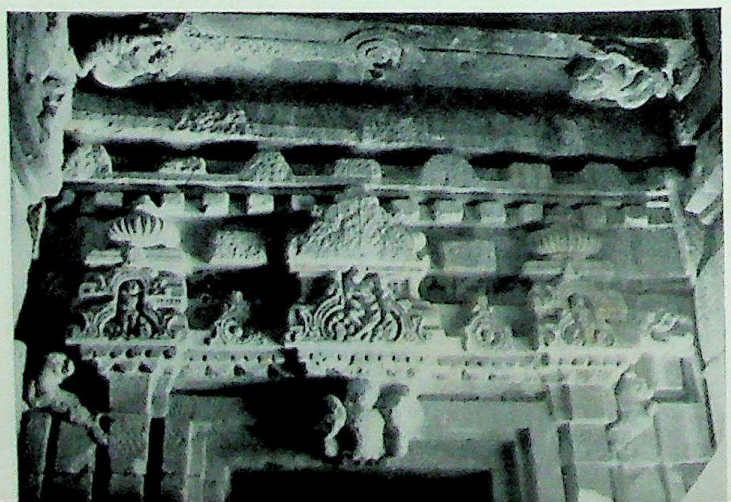
15. Tārabasappā temple. Shrine door details. Close-up.
16. Tārabasappā temple. Shrine door details.
17. Nārāyaṇ temple. Shrine door details.



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It was here, below the 'craggy eminence' of the Meguti, and within the old primitive looking cyclopean walls of the ancient city, and outside it, that for a period of two centuries (the sixth and the seventh) and then again in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, art activity thrived with great vigour, enthusiasm and exuberant vitality.

These more than hundred temples, most of them now in ruins, make a very fascinating subject for study. For here within an area of just three square miles or so is evidenced an art movement which is comparable only to that at Ellora, though in a different medium. The Chālukya effort is confined to this small area of Aihole and Bādāmi, but mainly at Aihole. It is possible to study the development of the Hindu temple movement from its early beginnings to its more developed forms at Aihole as it epitomises the whole movement within its narrow confines.

Legendary accounts

There are a number of interesting legendary accounts concerning Aihole, Bādāmi and other places. There is for instance the legend that connects the celebrated Paraśurāma with Aihole. It is said that after destroying the race of the Kshatriyas, and having avenged the death of his father Jamadagni, Paraśurāma came to the Malaprabhā to wash his bloody axe. At the sight of the river he cried *'Ai ai! Holi!'*. 'Ah! the river!' Even now pious villagers show visitors an axe-shaped rock on the river bank to the north of the village. Paraśurāma's presumed foot-prints are also pointed out on a rock in the river. Near his foot-prints is situated the Ramaliṅgam group of temples, venerated by the Hamirrai Kshatriya family whose representatives perform the car ceremony every year on the seventh of the bright half of Phālguna or February-March (*Bombay Gazetteer*, Bijapur, Vol. XXIII, Bombay, 1884, p. 545).

There are eight places in the Bijapur District which are connected with sages and demons: Aivalli in Bādāmi, Bādāmi itself, Bagalkot, Dhulkhed in Indi, Galgali in Kaladgi, Hippargi in Sindgi, and Mahākūṭa in Bādāmi. These old stories probably record the memories of the early fights between northern invaders and local chiefs (See *Indian Antiquary*, X, 102). Local legends place a demon named Ilvala at Aivalli and another called Vātāpī at Bādāmi, both of whose names are non-Sanskrit, and who were a terror to northern settlers in Dandakāraṇya until they were destroyed by the great seer Agastya at the holy Mahākūṭa, three miles east of Bādāmi. Bagalkot is said to have belonged to the musician Rāvaṇa, the demon-king of Ceylon. Dhulkhed on the Bhima in Indi is presumed to have been the scene of the great sacrifice offered by Śiva's father-in-law Daksha Prajāpati, at which, because he had not

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invited her husband Śiva, Daksha's daughter Satī killed herself by leaping into the sacrificial flames. Galgali on the Kṛishṇā in Kaldgi is named as having been the residence of the seer Gālava; and Hippargi in Sindgi has a temple of Kalameśwara which is said to have been originally built by Paraśurāma's father Jamadagni (*Bombay Gazetteer*, op. cit., p. 378).

The region

The Egyptian geographer Ptolemy (A.D. 150) has mentioned five places of consequence from this region. His Badiemaei, though much too far to the east, with the capital at Tathilla, may have been Bādāmi; Indi, though too far north, is perhaps the sub-divisional town of that name thirty miles north-east of Bijapur ; Kallingeris in Ariaca may be Kalkeri in Sindgi ; Modogulla on the Limyrica-Ariaca frontier is apparently Mudgal, about thirty miles east of Hungund ; and Petirgala in Ariaca is possibly Paṭṭadkal ten miles north-east of Bādāmi (*Bombay Gazetteer*, pp. 378-79).

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Part II

ARCHITECTURE

THE TEMPLES

The temple complex at Aihole presents a very fascinating subject of study for a student of the Hindu structural temple. For it was here at Aihole, on the banks of the river Malaprabhā (made sacred by Paraśu-rāma), below the imposing eminence of the Meguti hill, that some of the earliest structural temples of the Hindus were built from the sixth century A.D. onwards.

Temple movement

This temple movement besides was far more co-ordinate and much more integrated than the Gupta architectural movement that partly preceded it and was partly contemporaneous with it. It was besides a movement that was indigenous and independent, owing little to the Guptas. It had its roots in the soil and was a movement which was extremely vigorous and virile. In the course of over two centuries it produced forms which became basic to Hindu temple architecture. The movement itself preceded the ancient *Silpaśāstra* texts and probably influenced them. Here at Aihole, in the Deccan country, a new medium was being used for temple construction. From the rock-cut architectural movement that preceded it, this was a significant departure. Blocks of stone were used for vertical construction. This was a new kind of architecture, and it obviously posed new problems to the Hindu architect who met them by finding adequate solutions. In the course of time the Hindu structural temple evolved. From the simple structure that could house a crudely made cella in a veranda-like construction, to the mature temple with a *mukhamaṇḍapa*, an enclosed *sabhāmaṇḍapa*, an antechamber and a *pradakṣiṇa patha* ; thus did the temple-plan evolve. So also the *śikhara* or spire. From the simple beginnings in the Konti-gudī group and the Lad Khan to the more evolved forms at Durgā, Huchchimalli-gudī or Galagnath. The curvilinear and the pyramid-type *śikhara* developed here in the Deccan country, not in the south or the north. It is for this reason that Aihole presents an absorbing subject of study for a student of Indian temple architecture.

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KONTI-GUDI GROUP

It is customary to regard the Lad Khan temple at Aihole as the oldest there, and to regard those of the Konti-gudī group as being of a little later date. The ground plans of the temples of the latter group, as also their general architectural design, would, however, suggest for them an earlier date than that of Lad Khan.

The Konti-gudī group consists of three temples situated in the heart of the village. Of these, two are attached to each other by means of a pillared portico (Pl. 1) and stand facing each other in the east-west direction. The third temple of this group is adjacent to the temple that stands facing the east.

Temple (GP-1) The earliest of this group is the one with the transverse plan which stands facing the east (GP-1). It is 25′ in length and 43′ 8″ in breadth, which gives it the appearance of a veranda, with the shrine clumsily set in the back wall. At the entrance there are six pillars, three on each side of the central entrance. The intercolumnation is not uniform, varying between 5′ and 5′ 9″. There are eight more pillars inside supporting the ceiling. These are arranged in two rows in a transverse fashion. In between the two back pillars, at the centre, is the shrine (Pl. 2). Since it is set in the back wall, there is no *pradakṣiṇa* passage. The shrine is not square in shape, but is rectangular, 3′ 4″ in length and 5′ 6″ in breadth. The absence of a protecting wall to enclose the shrine indicates its early construction. This arrangement also makes provision for lighting and ventilation. It is interesting to note that there is no *mukhamaṇḍapa*, no *sabhāmaṇḍapa*, no *antarāla* and no *pradakṣiṇa* passage.

Pillars The pillars in the front are square in section, squat in height and topped by three-sided capitals. Mythological beings and amorous couples are carved on the pillars of the facade. The front corridor has four pillars. Of these, the two at the centre are elaborately carved. All the pillars are square in section, with square bases. The lower middle portions of the pillars show beaded designs that run upwards in vertical stripes to the centre of the shaft. Above, there are beaded festoons and floral bands running round the square box-like prism. Beautiful lotus medallions are carved above that, strongly resembling those at Amarāvatī. However, the lotus medallions are sometimes replaced by circular designs in which are carved amorous couples, *kīrtimukhas*, etc. The pillars at the two ends show the same composition, but no carving.

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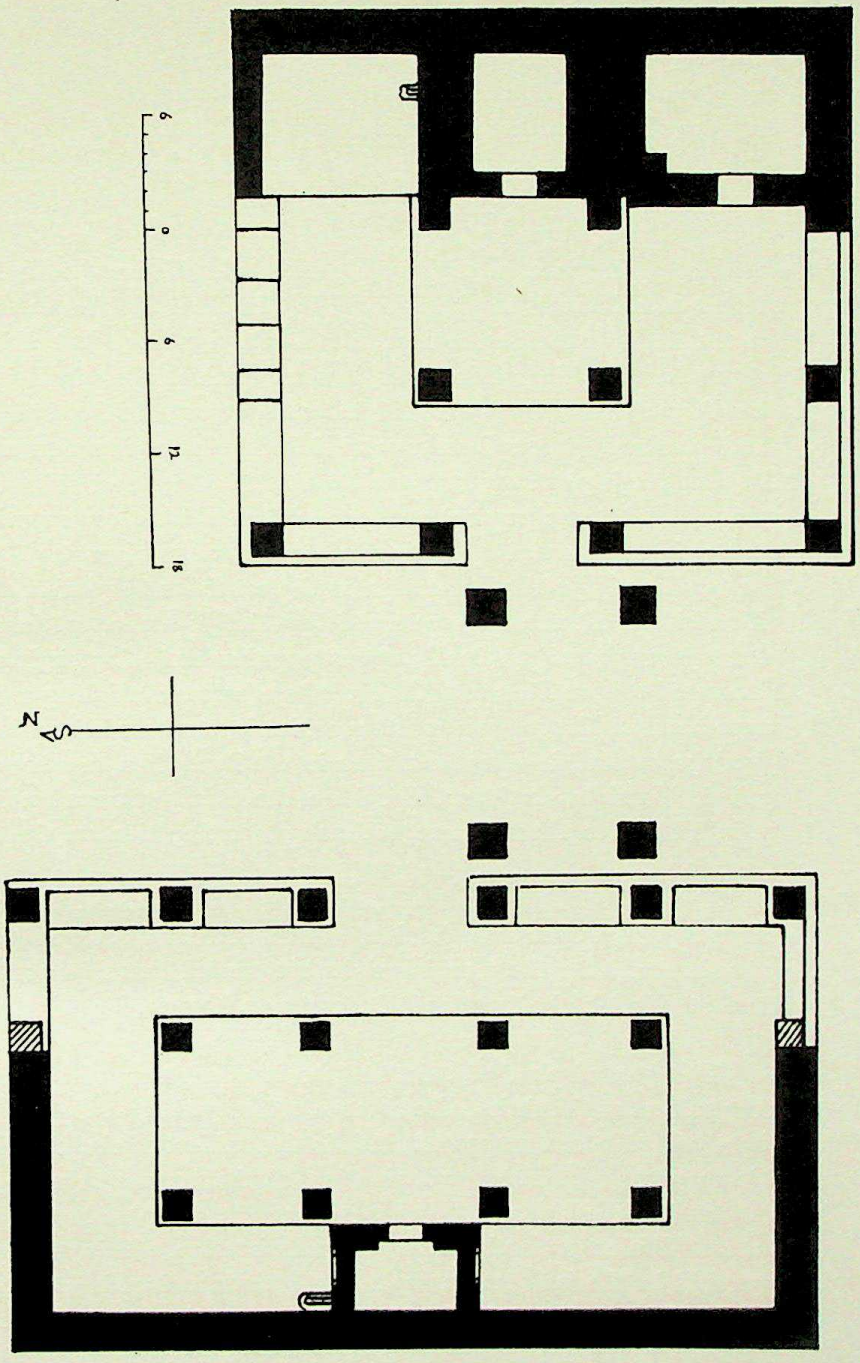

GP-1 (below) and GP-2 (above). Ground-plans of two Konti-gudi temples

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The mark of the chisel, however, is unmistakable upon them, suggesting that they have been left unfinished. All the pillars rest on a slightly raised platform. Of the four pillars at the back, those at the extreme ends are similar to those described above. No carving has been done on them. The pillars on the two sides of the shrine door show standing images of Śiva as *dvārapāla*.

Shrine The shrine is at a slightly higher level. The walls of the shrine are plain. There is no image or *liṅga* inside. The dedicatory block on the lintel of the shrine-door adorns a flying Garuḍa holding Nāgas in two hands. The shrine-door is comparatively low in height. The door-frame shows vertical and horizontal courses of floral and lozenge motifs and miniature pilasters sandwiched between them on either side. An overhanging canopy rests on the lintel. On either side of this are carved *Chaitya*-arches that are yet in the process of evolution. The canopy is surmounted by horizontal courses of mouldings. The one at the top has a *gopuram*-like design at the centre and squarish cupolas on either side. All these are adorned by *Chaitya*-arches set inside them. The *gopuram* motif obviously seems popular here, since it is continued all around the entablature of the three bays below the ceiling and over the cross-beams. The *gopuram* pattern, which is seen here in its primitive beginnings, evolved in a maturer form in the Dravidian country at a later period. In niches on the exterior side of the shrine walls are fixed images of gods, Vishṇu on the northern wall and a dancing Śiva on the southern.

Ceiling The ceiling of the *maṇḍapa*, in front of the shrine entrance, forms three bays in a transverse fashion. Here, three huge stone slabs rest on cross-beams. On these ceiling slabs are carved beautiful sculptures of Brahmā, Umā-Maheśwara and Nārāyaṇa on Ananta.

Ground-plan The ground-plan of this temple, its designing and architecture, the position of the shrine, the absence of the *mukhamaṇḍapa, sabhāmaṇḍapa, antarāla*, etc., suggest that it is the earliest of the temples of the Aihole group. A closer examination of the temple structure reveals another notable feature. The plinth of the temple shows two cross-beams of stone projecting in a forward direction. This arrangement is repeated in the adjacent temple that stands facing the east. It gives the temple structure a chariot-like effect, suggesting a movement forward.

Temple (GP-2) The other temple which belongs to this group is the one joined to it by a pillared portico that stands facing the west (GP-2). This porch is

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supported by four pillars with a flat roof and eaves at the ends. The brackets are adorned by beautifully carved *Yālis* with dwarfs at their bellies. The *Yālis* rise from the pillars to support the ceiling, and these with their dwarf figures are reminiscent of similar figures carved on the brackets of the facade pillars of Cave No. 3 at Bādāmi. The bracket figures are certainly imposing, though they do not have the refined quality and great dignity of later Chālukya examples. Yet, even in this early form, they impress by their massiveness and brute vitality. The powerful *Yālis* that rise to support the mighty beams above and the dwarfs underneath make strange company (Pl. 3). The temple itself stands facing the west. It has a squarish plan and resembles the one described above in one respect. It has no *mukhamaṇḍapa* (unless the pillared portico in between the two temples is considered as such), no *sabhamaṇḍapa* and no *pradakṣīṇa patha*. It has, however, one additional feature that the former does not have. A squarish platform-like structure has been built on top of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* (Pl. 4). It may be the rudimentary beginnings of the *śikhara*. The roof of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* has been made flat to receive an additional structure and slopes all round from here. The roof of the structure above the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* is also flat. Once there were long rounded beams of stone on the top in imitation of wooden architecture, fixed to the joints of the slabs. The grooves made in the latter can still be seen.

Sikhara

The very heavy *śikhara*-like structure above is 5′ in height. Between two heavy mouldings are carved miniature pilasters, false doors indicating shrine doors, *makara* motifs, etc. The lowest mouldings or overhanging canopies are roundish at the ends, while arches are seen at regular intervals. The topmost moulding has heavy square cupolas in the Dravidian style with a *Chaitya*-arch motif issuing from the mouths of *kīrtimukhas*. This design is continued on all the four sides. In the central portion of the middle band are carved Śaiva and Vaishṇavite deities. The western side shows Varaha, the east has Vishṇu's Vāmana incarnation (or Tripuri), the north side, Śiva dancing, and the south, Gajāsura (?). Unfortunately, all the figures are badly mutilated. It is interesting to note that on the east and west sides Vaishṇava deities are carved, while on the north and south Śaiva deities are sculptured.

Pillars

The temple proper consists of a veranda-like structure. Its roof is supported by four facade pillars, the two front pillars of what may be called the open *sabhāmaṇḍapa*, the two pilasters on either side of the shrine, one pillar on the south side, a pilaster behind this and another

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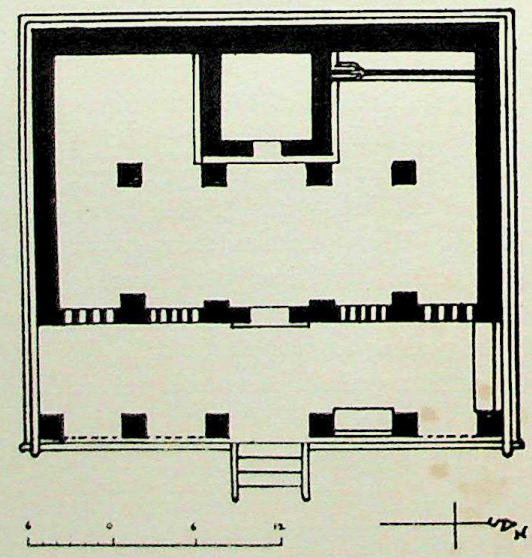
pilaster on the north side. Later inhabitants of the temple have added masonry walls on the front and the north. On the latter side has also been added a doorway with a Garuḍa on the lintel. On the exterior wall here on the north a huge stone ladder rests leading to the upper roof and the *śikhara*-like structure.

The pillars on the facade and the side walls are heavy and lack in height. Yet they are imposing. They have a square base. The shaft above is fluted. Above is an inverse arch-type design. Above this are floral bands all round. More carvings of floral motifs can be seen above. Still further up is another arch-type design without any carving. The shaft above is fluted and square. The bracket capital is sometimes two-sided and sometimes three-sided. The pillars of the open *sabhāmaṇḍapa* are far more elaborate and very richly carved. The base is square in section. Above this are bands of lotus-petal and floral motifs. On top of these is an arch-like decoration with a *kīrti-mukha* above. Another *kīrtimukha* is also carved above with beaded festoons issuing out of its mouth. Above all these are three bands showing a lotus-petal design and lozenges. Above is a triangular arch with floral motifs. The moulded neck is topped by an *āmalaka* without flutings and a heavy two-sided capital with moulded side-brackets.

The shrine doorway is very decorative (Pl. 5). It shows a man-Garuḍa holding *Nāga* tails in his two hands. On two sides below are seen river-goddesses as also *ghata-pallavas*.

Temple (GP-3)

The third temple of this group is smaller in dimension and resembles the first one in its ground-plan (GP-3). It is, however, the latest of the three as its design and construction reveals. Here, for the first time, the space within has been enclosed by building a transverse wall with perforated windows, and a central entrance (Pl. 6). This wall causes a complete transformation in the plan of the temple. The shrine is no longer exposed as it is in the first two exam-



GP-3. Ground plan of a temple adjoining Konti-gudi

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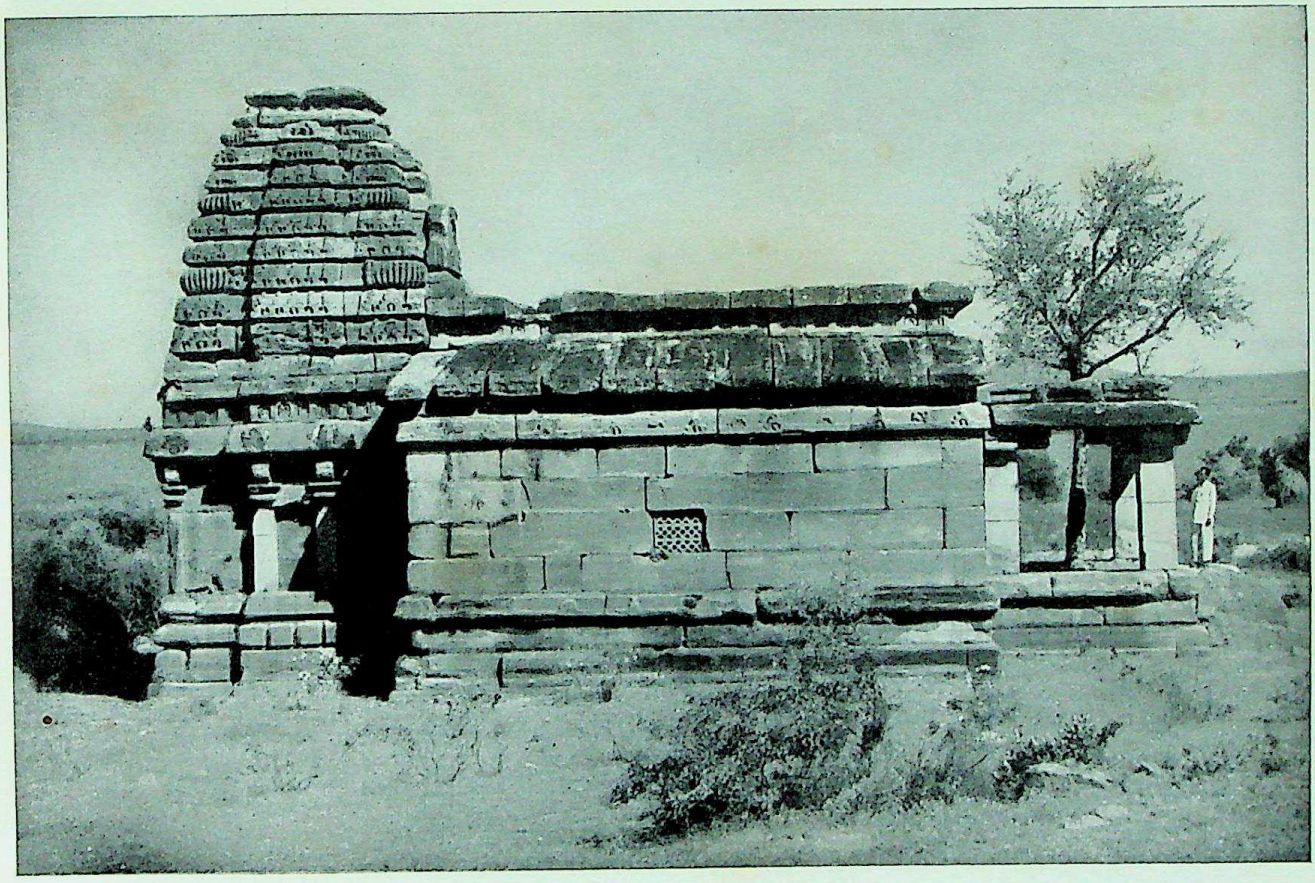
18. Huchchappayyā-gudī. General view.
19. Huchchappayyā-gudī. Details of entrance doorway.



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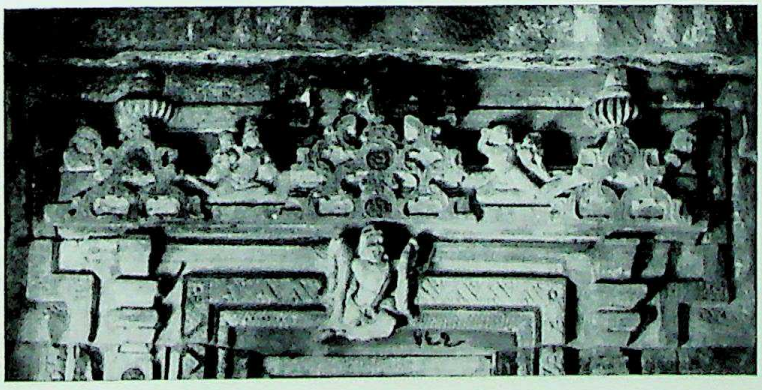

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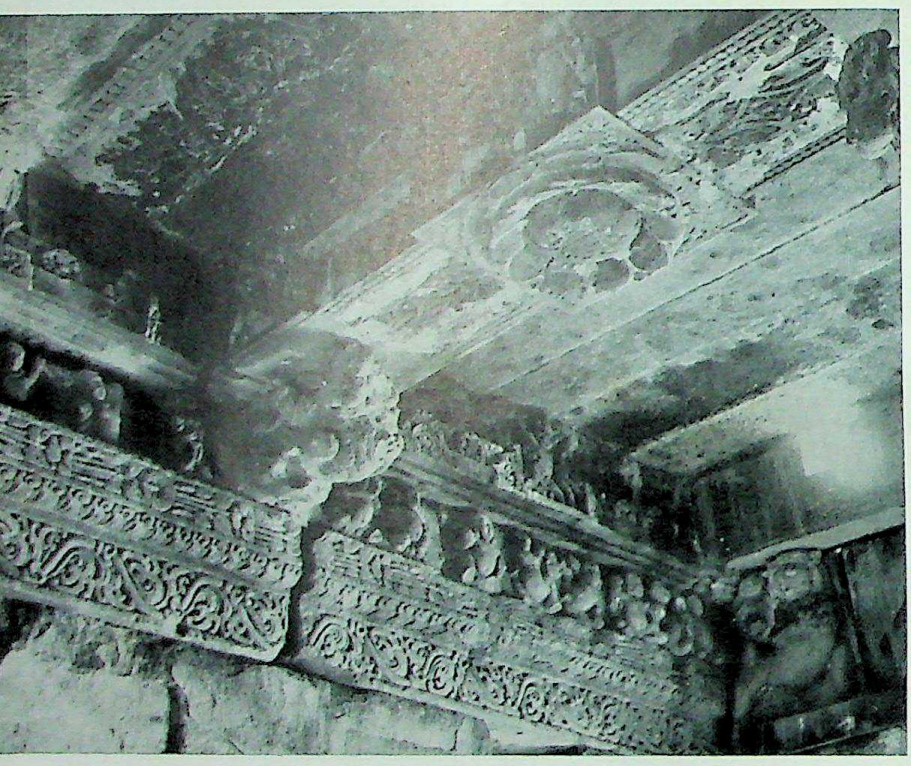
20. Huchchappayyā-gudī. Details of interior.
21. Huchchappayyā-gudī. Sculpture of Yama



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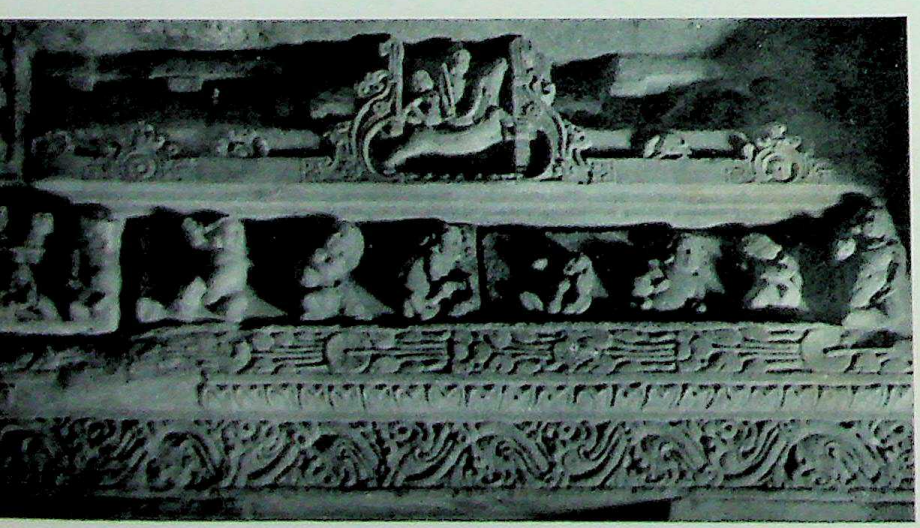

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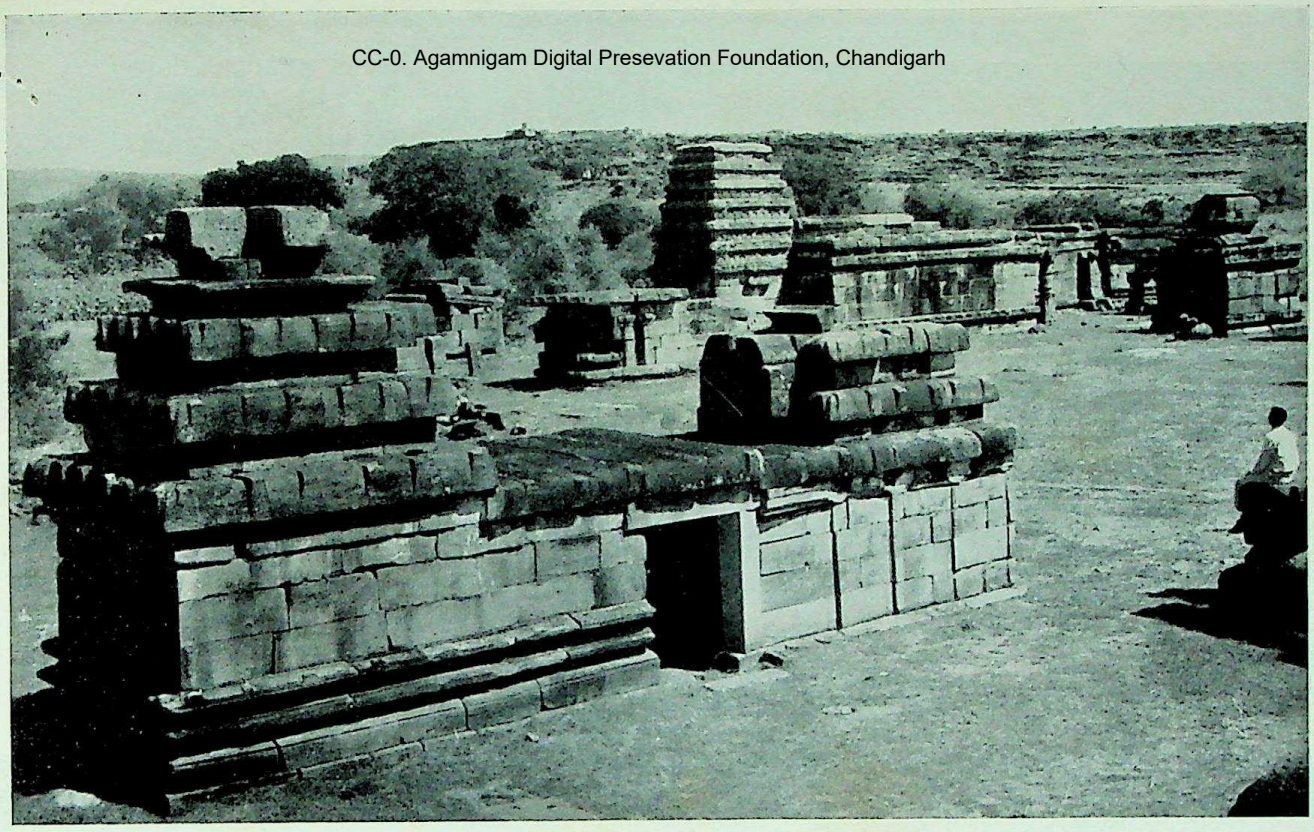

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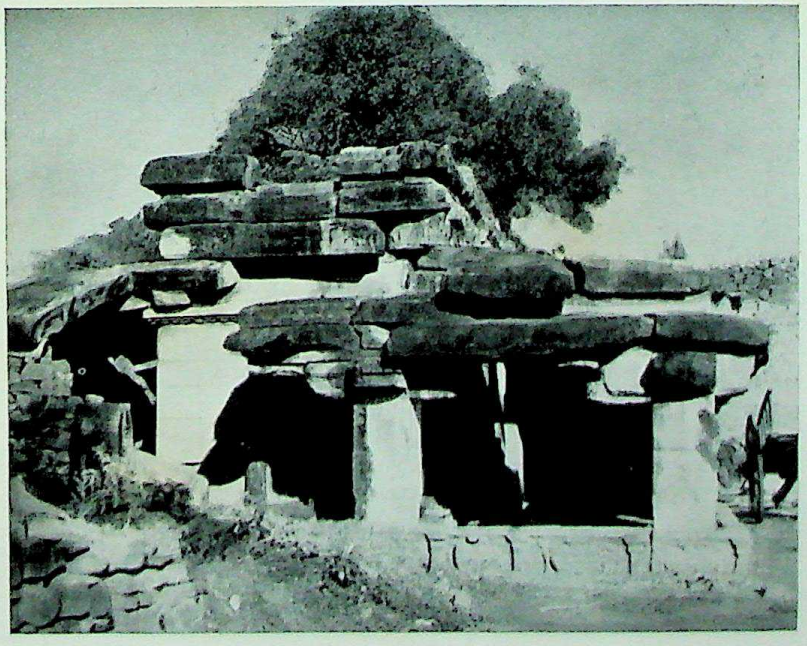
22. Temple with curvilinear śikhara, near the main temple, Galagnath group.
23. Gaudar-gudī. General view.



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24. Gaudar-gudī. Shrine door details. Top.
25. Gaudar gudī. Shrine door details. Side.

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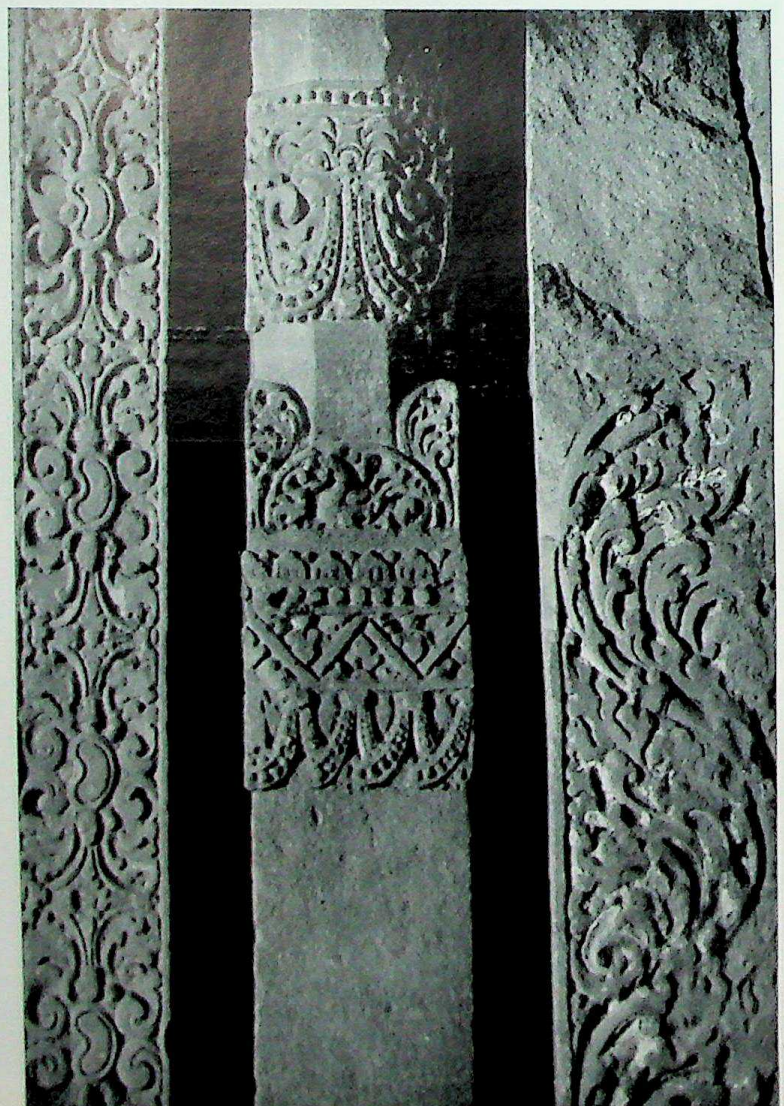

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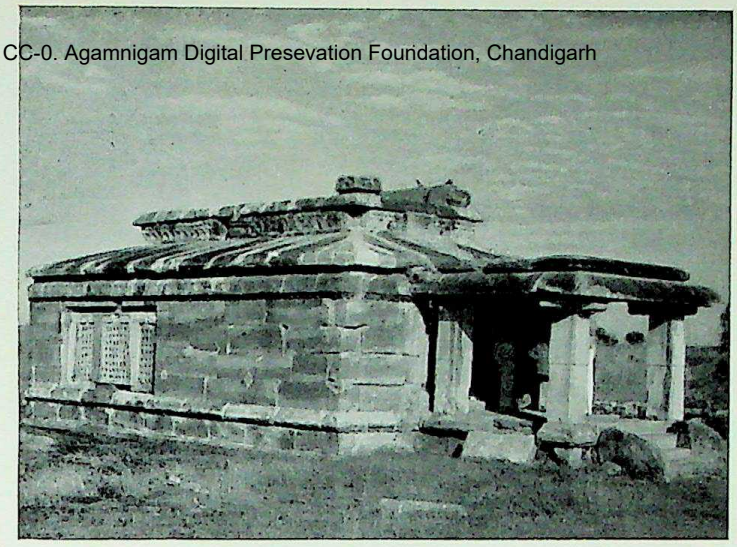

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26. Chikka-gudī. General view.
27. Chikka gudī. General view from another side.

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28. Chikka-gudī. Details of pillar in hall.
29. Huchchimalli-gudī. General view.

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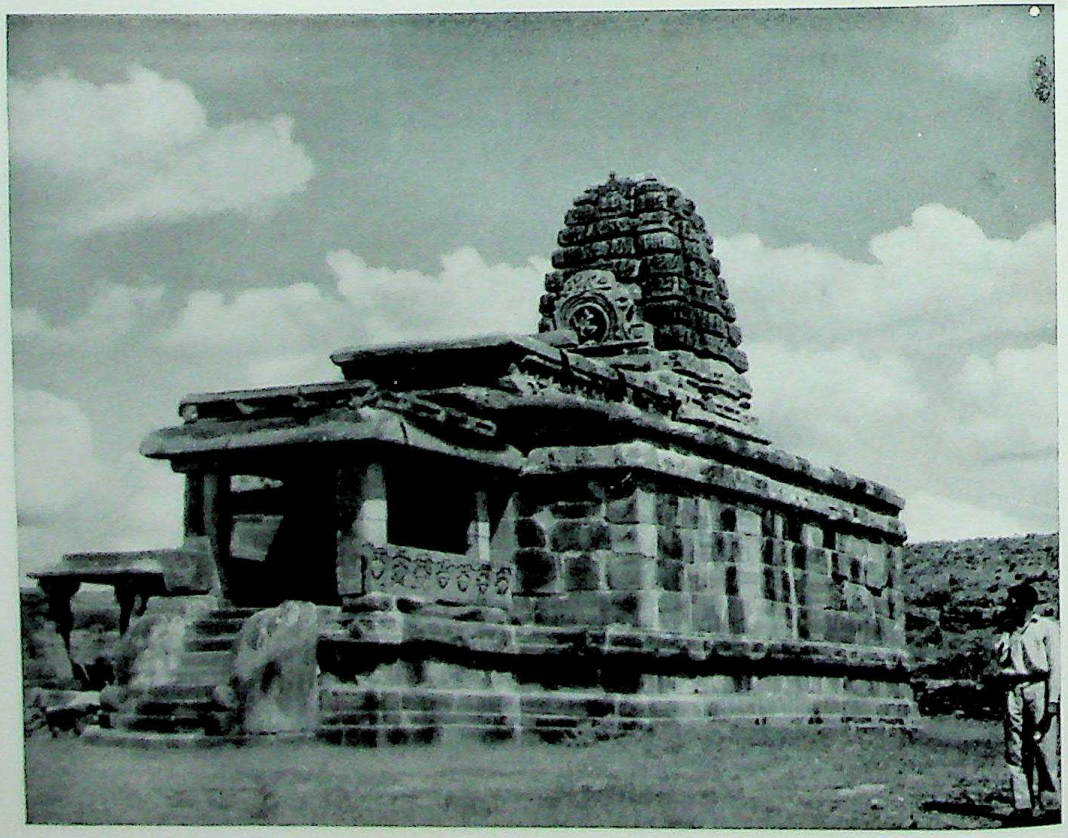

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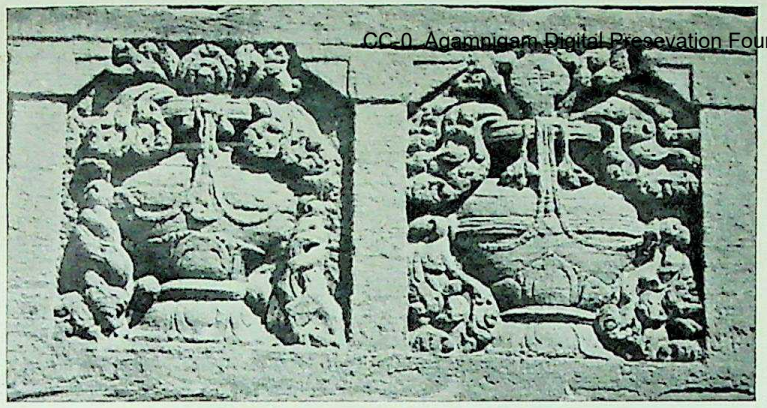

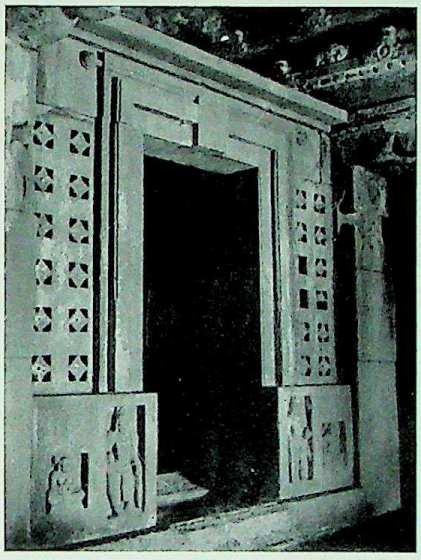

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30. Huchchimalli-gudī. Vase and foliage motifs.
31. Huchchimalli-gudī. Details of antarala doorway.
32. Durgā temple. General view.

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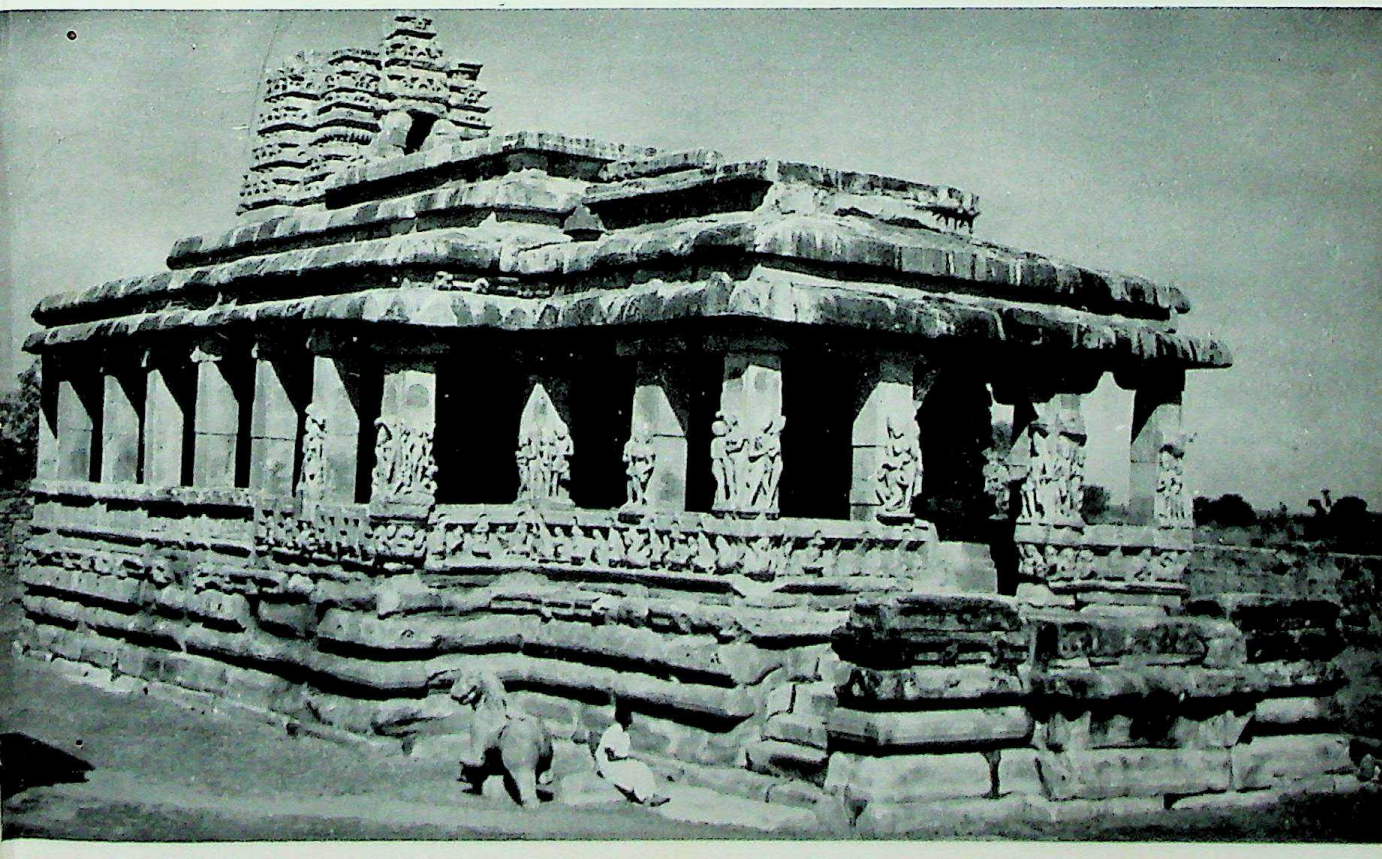

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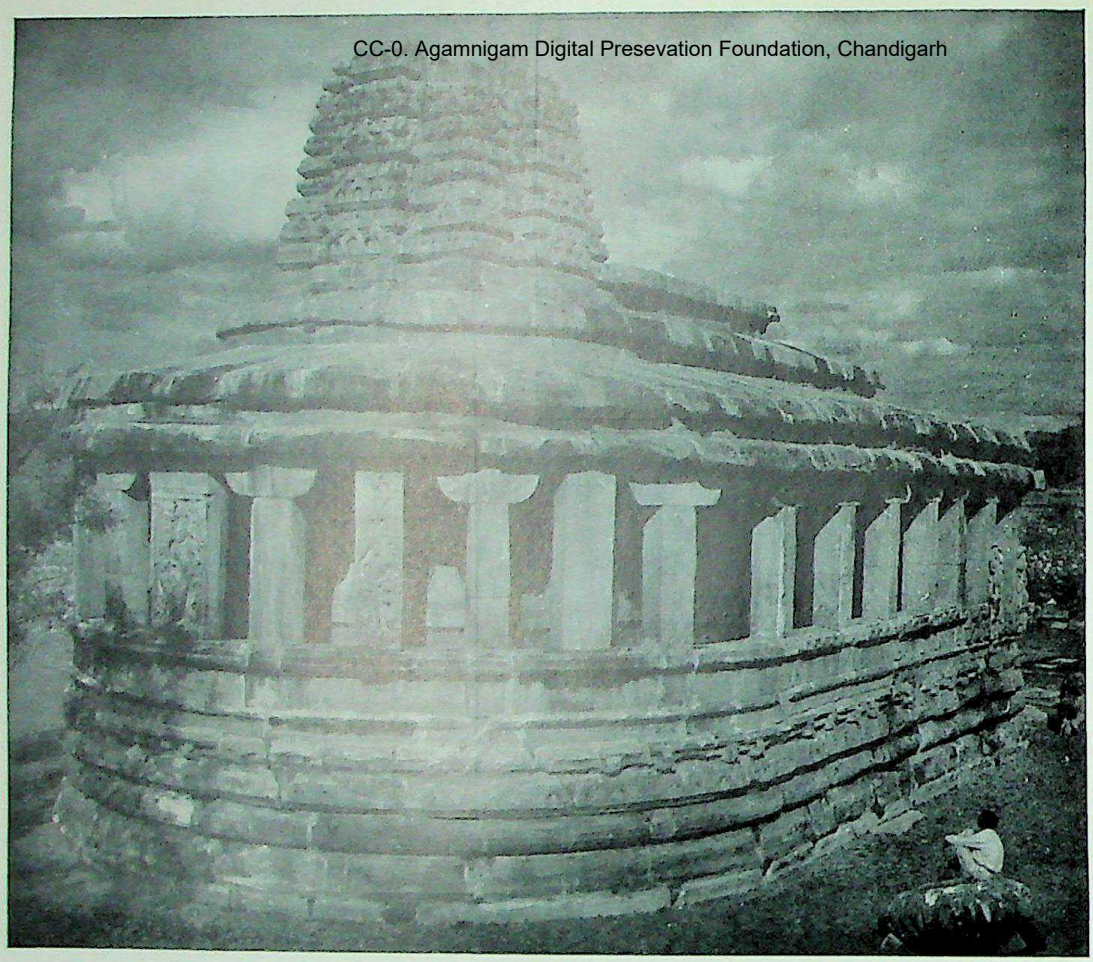

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33. Durgā temple. View from circular front. Close-up.
34. Durgā temple. View from circular front.
35. Durgā temple. Passage with pillars.

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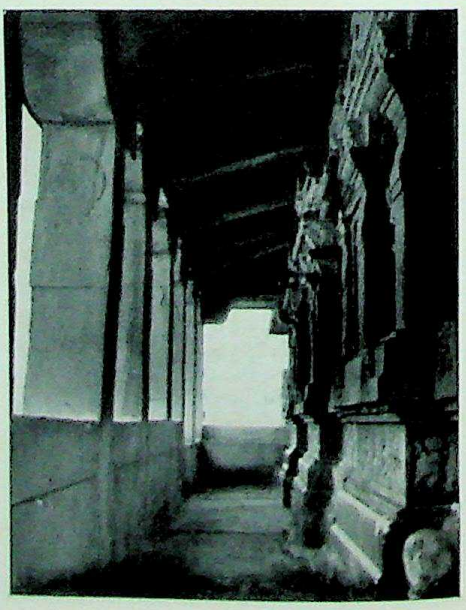

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ples. It is enclosed, as it is in later Hindu temples, within a wall-space. The shrine is thus separated from the veranda by a wall-enclosure. To admit light within, the wall actually consists of large perforated windows (plain in design with square blocks), which rest on a parapet wall. The doorway of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* is unfinished. The wall itself seems to be a later addition as the stone grilles are fixed between the pillars of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa*. This marks a definite evolution in the Hindu temple, when the shrine becomes enshrined in an enclosed space. The main *maṇḍapa* is supported by four pillars arranged in transverse fashion. The hall is rectangular in plan but the shrine enclosed within the two central pillars is square in shape.

Shrine

The shrine door shows a Garuḍa on the lintel. He is depicted holding *Nāgas* in his two hands (Pls. 7 and 8). The designing of the shrine door-frame is different here from that in the earlier two examples. It involves a later addition and a different style. On either side of the shrine door are five vertical bands. The first shows the creeper motif. The second one, however, is more interesting with its erotic couples in *Yab-Yum* postures. The third band shows a pilaster with a plain vertical block above, over which rest lotus and cup-like motifs and cushion-like capitals, and a square abacus on the top. The fourth band depicts round beaded pillars with lotus motifs at intervals. The fifth band has a lotus-petal design, such as is common at Ajanta. On the door-jamb, on the left, is carved *Sankhanidhi*. *Padmanidhi* has been sculptured on the extreme right.

Above the *Garuḍa* lintel are seen Dravidian style *śikharas* and *gopuram* motifs. Above these are lions shown issuing forth from *makaramukhas*.

Verandah

The temple has a slight elevation. The verandah is entered by means of a flight of just three steps. The pillars were probably originally joined together by a parapet wall for a part of the wall is seen enclosing the verandah on one side. The space between two pillars on the right of the entrance steps is also similarly enclosed. At the front, at extreme ends, are seen small beams projecting forward giving the temple a chariot-like effect. The pillared *maṇḍapa* has a huge overhanging canopy on three sides, curved inside.

Pillars

The pillars are square in section and heavy in their proportions. This is not surprising since they have to bear the heavy weight of the roof above. They swell out in the middle and show floral and other bands on a box-like prism. The capital above is four-sided and heavy, curving up at an angle of 45 degrees. The pillars in the *maṇḍapa* are bracketed.

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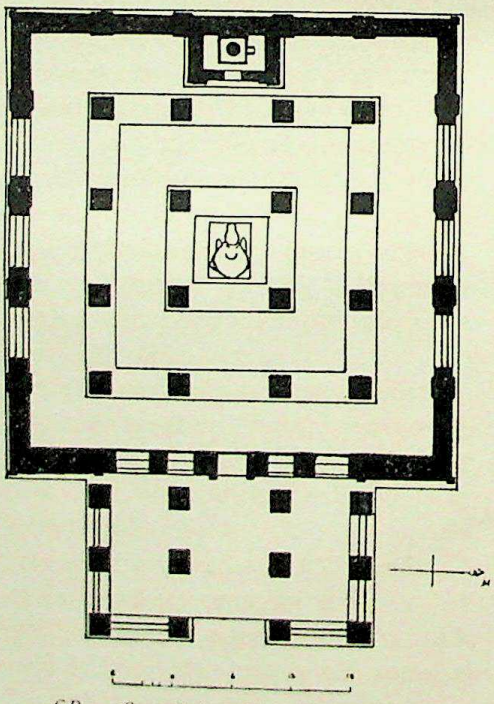
Ceiling The ceiling of the temple is flat and the temple bears some resemblance to the Gupta temple at Tigawa (Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture, Buddhist and Hindu*, 1959, Pl. XLII). This temple, however, is larger than the Tigawa example, being 36′×36′ in size.

Facade The six pillars of the facade show *kakśāsanas* with a vase and foliage or *ghata-pallava* motif, which became important in Chālukya and Rāshṭrakūṭa architecture. On the right side entrance pillar, on the south, are seen a bull and an elephant with a common head, reminiscent of a similar one carved on the left side facade of Cave No. 1 at Bādāmi. This looks like an after-thought, considering its low relief.

LAD KHAN

Of the earliest group of temples here, the Lad Khan seems to be the latest (Pl. 9). All earlier writers consider this as the oldest temple in the Aihole complex (See 'The Chālukyan Architecture of the Kanarese Districts,' by Henry Cousens, *Archaeological Survey of India*, Vol. XLII, Calcutta, 1926, p. 32; Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture, Buddhist and Hindu*, 1959, pp. 52-53). A comparison of the ground-plans of the temples of the Konti-gudī group and of the Lad Khan temple, however, would suggest a later date for the latter. The first shrine of the Konti-gudī group is placed in an open veranda. The idea of the central enclosed *maṇḍapa* had not yet evolved. Its designing has no place even for the *mukha-maṇḍapa*. The square temple of the Konti-gudī group with two shrines at the back is similar to this temple in design. The *sanctum sanctorum* is still exposed and is protected only by a veranda-like structure. Even in the



GP-4. *Ground-plan of Lad Khan temple*

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third shrine of the Konti-gudī group, where the shrine is protected by an enclosure, the latter gives the impression of being a later addition. In this temple, the space between the veranda pillars has been closed by building a parapet wall on which big perforated window-like structures rest. The arrangement of the pillars also suggests a very primitive design. The idea of the temple is yet to evolve. The Konti-gudī group is representative of a period when the *Sthāpaka* and *Sthāpati* were endeavouring hard to evolve a structural temple for worship. A new experiment in building was being made and the priest-architect was still grappling in the dark to find a temple design which would satisfy the needs of Hindu worship.

Plan (GP-4)

Lad Khan takes the Hindu priest-architect a step further forward in the evolution of the temple-structure (GP-4). Though the temple is simple in design, it is certainly better conceived than those of the Konti-gudī group, and has a *mukhamaṇḍapa* and a *sabhāmaṇḍapa*. This development is in itself a step forward in architectural evolution and suggests for it a later dating.

Mukha-mandapa

The *mukhamaṇḍapa* of Lad Khan is 18′ 7½″ in length and 33′ 5″ in breadth and is supported by twelve pillars set in three rows in a transverse fashion. The side pillars of the *mukhamaṇḍapa* are joined by a low parapet wall with *kakṣāsanas* showing *pūrṇakalaśas* on the exterior. The latter was a device conceived in the Gupta period symbolizing the bowl of plenty. In the period of the Guptas, the *pūrṇakalaśa* came to be used as a capital design. It symbolized the 'bowl of plenty,' 'typifying a renewed faith, the water nourishing the plant trailing from its brim.' The *ghata-pallava* capital became an accepted form of pillar capital in the architectural scheme of the Chālukyas, who also used it as a decorative design for the *kakṣāsanas* of the *mukhamaṇḍapas*. At Aihole, this design is almost uniformly seen in all the temples.

Pillars

The pillars of the temple are heavy and massive in proportion. This is natural as here they have to perform the function of supporting the heavy stone roof. The shafts of the pillars are single heavy blocks of stone on which rest the separately cut out heavy bracket capitals. The pillars of the *mukhamaṇḍapa* have beautiful images carved on them. On the extreme south pillar of the facade is seen Yamunā standing on her left foot on a tortoise, accompanied by two female dwarfs on two sides and two flying figures. Gaṅgā (?) stands on the extreme north pillar on a *makara*. The river goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā were worshipped both in the North and the South. It is maintained that the

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custom of portraying them on the two sides of the shrine door was started in the Gupta period in North India. In the Gupta temple of Tigawa (Jabalpur District of Madhya Pradesh), Gaṅgā and Yamunā figures are carved on the two sides of the shrine entrance (See Dr. Mirashi, *Vākataka Nripati āṇi tyāñchā kāla*, Nagpur, 1957, pp. 137-38). In the beginning, these were carved at the top of the door jambs. At Aihole, and at other places like Bādāmi and Ellora, they are brought down to the bottom of the door jambs. That the Chālukyas revered these two sacred rivers is obvious since a number of their inscriptions mention them. 'Vijayāditya's inscription, for instance, says that he conquered some great King of North India when he acquired the *Pali-dhvaja* banner and also the insignia of the rivers Gaṅgā and Yamunā' (Cousens, *Chālukyan Architecture*, p. 34). It is interesting to note that this was also a Rāshṭrakūṭa insignia (*Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. I, Part II, pp. 338, 368, 371, 387, 396 and 416). Actually, the Gaṅgā-Yamunā motif became popular even with the Buddhist and Jains as evidenced at Ellora (Gupte and Mahajan, *Ajanta, Ellora and Aurangabad Caves*, 1962, pp. 41, 164, etc., Pl. XCIV). It is possible that the Chālukyas may have borrowed this motif from the Guptas. The Chālukya architectural movement, however, runs almost parallel to the Gupta movement and does not seem to owe much to it. The Gaṅgā-Yamunā motif is common at Aihole since these rivers were revered in the Deccan as well and(in almost all the temples at Aihole, the Gaṅgā-Yamunā figures are carved on the door jambs of the *mukhamaṇḍapa* and the *garbhagṛiha*.>

Ganga-Yamuna

Mandapa

Entrance to the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* is secured through the door which faces the *mukhamaṇḍapa* entrance. The main *maṇḍapa* is supported by sixteen pillars arranged to form two squares, one within the other and providing a double aisle all round. A big stone *Nandī* is placed in the space between the four central pillars, facing the shrine, with the back of the *Nandī* towards the entrance to the *maṇḍapa*. There are more pillars, now converted into pilasters, that support the roof on the sides—five on each side (north and south) of the main *maṇḍapa*. There are two more at the back of the temple. The *sanctum sanctorum* is placed in the back wall of the back corridor. It is set in between the two back pillars and is rectangular in shape.

Grilles

Light is admitted into the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* through stone grilles fixed on either side walls (north and south). There are three grilles in each wall (Pl. 10). Of these, the central shows thick stone bars cutting one another at right angles, with tiny lotus designs carved at the inter-

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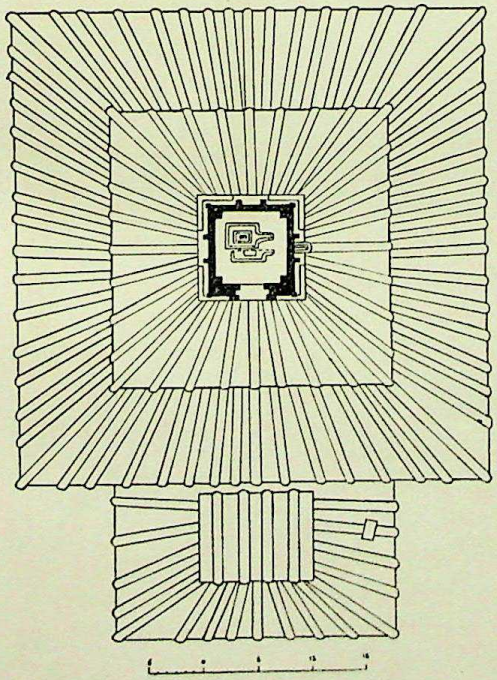
sections. Those at the side have beautiful floral designs. In the west or back wall and the east or front wall are fixed circular windows with an attractive fish design in square frames (Pl. 11). The fish with their mouths touching the lotus flower carved at the centre form the spokes of a wheel. This fish design is sculptured in many other temples at Aihole. Four windows of this type are fixed in the eastern wall and two in the back or western wall. It is interesting to note that the same design is to be found on the ceiling of Cave No. 2 at Bādāmi.

Shrine

The dedicatory block of the shrine has a man-Garuḍa carved on it, suggesting its Vaishṇavite affiliations. *Dvārapālas* guard the shrine door on either side. Inside is a *liṅga*. On the roof of the *maṇḍapa* is another shrine with images carved on its three exterior walls. On the north can be seen a female under a tree. On the south is a four-armed Vishṇu holding a wheel and *akṣamālā* in the two right hands, conch in one left hand, with the other left hand resting on the hip; he is accompanied by a male companion who carries his mace. This is very interesting. The female companion on his right is shown carrying the male, who has a halo behind his head. On the west or the back wall of the shrine is Sūrya. This sculpture is only half-finished.



Plan of the upper Śikhara of Lad Khan temple

Sikhara

At this early stage in the development of temple architecture, the *śikhara* had not yet evolved. This is not surprising. The structural temple in the process of evolution was an imitation of the older wooden architecture. That is why the temples of the Konti-gudī group resemble rock-cut shrines. This is also why this early temple does not have a *śikhara*. Lad Khan, however, has a small shrine built right on the *maṇḍapa* ceiling. This shrine faces the east and has a flat roof but no *śikhara*. It would of course have been wrong to build a *śikhara* on this shrine as it is not the main one.

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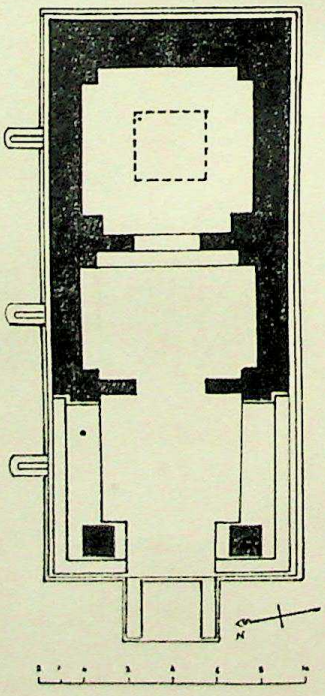
In the course of the evolution of the structural temple, the *śikhara* motif came to be developed a little later, and when it did develop the *śikhara* was placed over the main shrine. Cousens' contention that the carving of Sūrya on the western wall suggests that this small shrine was probably dedicated to him, 'being placed on the roof so that the rays of the rising sun could shine straight into the cell and on the image within' (Cousen, *Chālukyan Architecture*, p. 34) seems acceptable. The existence of these two shrines, one dedicated to Vishṇu and one to Sūrya, would justify the name 'Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa temple' given to it by S. R. Balasubramanyam (*Lalit Kala*, Oct. 1961, pp. 41-44).

Architectural evolution

The Chālukya architectural movement that began with the opening of the 6th century A.D. continued to evolve new forms and use new techniques. The next stage in the evolution of the Chālukya art movement is represented by the Tārabasappā and Nārāyan temples and the main(?) temple of the Galagnāth group. In this stage of development the shrine is clearly marked out from the main *maṇḍapa*. It is not an after-thought like the Lad Khan shrine, which looks more like a clumsily constructed room rather than a well-planned shrine. In Lad Khan, even the walls of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* seem to have been later closed by the insertion of huge latticed windows.

Temple (GP-5)

In the next phase of evolution, the shrine became detached from the *sabhāmaṇḍapa*. When this experiment was made for the first time, it was naturally done with a sense of diffidence, and on a modest scale. The first example of this is the small temple (11′ 5″ in breadth and 25′ 10″ in length) in the Huchchimalli-gudī group (Pl. 12). Its exterior resembles the Tigawa temple, but its ground plan is different (GP-5). At Tigawa, the portico opens straight into the shrine (See Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture, Buddhist and Hindu*, 1959, Fig. 1, Pl. XLII). At Aihole, the portico opens into a small *sabhāmaṇḍapa* that seems more like an *antarāla*. The shrine is larger than the *sabhāmaṇḍapa*. The important thing, however, is that the former is detached from the latter.



GP-5. Ground-plan of the temple adjoining Huchchimalli-gudī

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Portico and porch

The portico is supported by two pillars and two pilasters. On the exterior side of the *kakśāsanas* are carved waterpots with plants issuing out of them. The porch is 11′ 5″ in breadth and 8′ 6″in length. An entrance doorway leads to the main hall. The distinctive feature of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* is a total absence of any pillar support, meaning that the walls are load-bearing. Light is admitted to the *sabhāmaṇḍapa*, which is just 6′ 9½″ in breadth and 5′ 8½″ in length, only through the porch doorway. It is obvious that a larger hall would not have been possible without any pillar support.

Shrine

The shrine door is 2′ 3″ in breadth. The shrine is not a square, being 6′ 10″ in breadth and 7′ 5″ in length and the four offsets at the corners break its squarish shape.

The outer walls of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* and shrine are plain. There is no *śikhara* either above the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* or the shrine. The ceiling is flat.

Here at Huchchimalli, for the first time, the shrine is detached from the *sabhāmaṇḍapa*, to play an important part in Hindu ritual. This first experiment is naturally hesitating. In Tārabasappā, Nārāyaṇ and Huchchimalli temples, the experiment was carried out more successfully.

TARABASAPPA TEMPLE

Portico

The Tārabasappā temple (GP-6), which stands facing the east, has a porch which is accessible through a small flight of steps (Pl. 13). Four plain pillars, square in section, support the flat roof of the portico, which is 10′ 8″ by 12′ 6″. The pillars have no base. They are just blocks of solid masonry surmounted by four-sided (the two front pillars) and two-sided (two back pillars) capitals. The entrance doorway which leads to the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* has a man-Garuḍa carved on its dedicatory block. Light is admitted to the hall through two latticed windows fixed in the two side walls, and these are set a little above the plinth, over a course of masonry. They are small in dimension and simply conceived. Four

Pillars

pillars set in a square in the centre and four pilasters—two in the front wall and two in the back wall—support the ceiling of the *sabhamaṇḍapa*. The pillars are square in section and without bases. Broad and flat bands were made for friezes, and circular designs were also made for carving lotus medallions, but the work on the pillars has been left

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incomplete. The capitals are huge and two-sided and their mouldings give them a decorative appearance. The triforium above the pillars depicts beautiful *Chaitya*-arches with floral motifs inside (Pl. 14). Dwarfs are shown bearing the weight of the highly decorative cross-beams. These have a chain of lotus flowers carved upon them, with a large one carved at the centre.

Sabha-mandapa

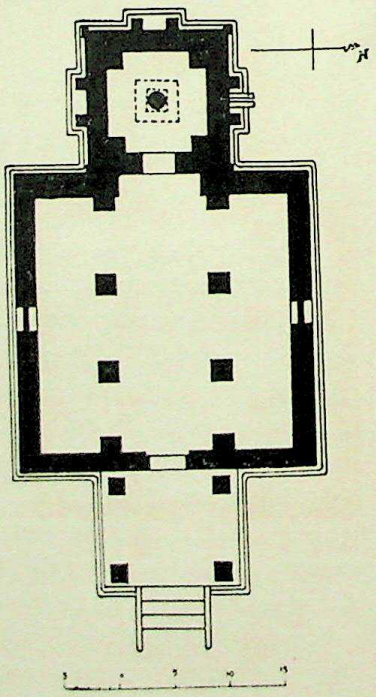
The *sabhāmaṇḍapa* is square in shape. It is 23′ in breadth and 23′ 4″ in length. Unlike Lad Khan, the walls here are not just made up of screens fixed in between pillars. These walls are made of courses of masonry blocks set up horizontally, one upon the other, without the use of binding mortar, and are blind excepting the space wherein the lattice stone windows are fixed.

Shrine

The shrine entrance is 3′ in breadth. The dedicatory block shows an incomplete man-Garuḍa (Pl. 15). The door-jambs are plain and have not been worked upon. On the two sides of the shrine door, on pilaster capitals, are shrine-like structures with figures carved inside *Chaitya*-arches. These shrines have *āmalaka*-capitals with *kalaśa* finials. In the centre is another false shrine. Above this, false stone beams are seen projecting out in imitation of wooden architecture. The *Chaitya*-arch motif is carved all round on the entablatures (Pl. 16) and inside the arches are floral motifs. Above two rows of *Chaitya*-arches are carved false doors inside tiny niches.

Plan (GP-6)

The ground-plan of the Tārabasappā temple is an improvement on Lad Khan. In the latter temple, the shrine does not really form a part of the overall architectural scheme. It has more the appearance of an after-thought, executed with crudity. Its entire setting gives one the overwhelming impression of clumsiness. At Tārabasappā, however, the shrine is well conceived and is a part of the general scheme. Here, too, for the first time the shrine is placed outside the *sabhāmaṇḍapa*



GP-6. Ground-plan of Tārabasappā temple

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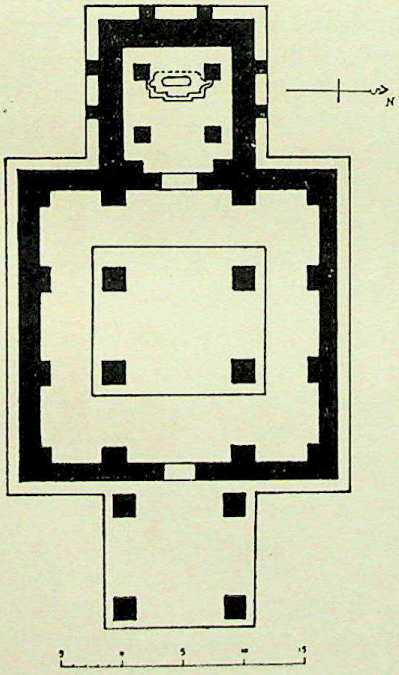
and detached from it. In the Konti-gudī and Lad Khan groups, the cella forms part of the main hall itself. Even the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* was in imitation of the old *santhagara* and evolved out of it. At this time, Hindu ritual was in the process of evolution. Image worship came into Hinduism round about the fourth century A.D. Rituals, therefore, were not fixed, but were in the process of evolution. The structural temple tried to satisfy the needs of ritualistic worship, and as long as these rituals were simple, the temples were simply conceived. As these became complicated, the early plan had to be modified to satisfy the new rituals. In the early 6th century A.D., when the Konti-gudī group and the Lad Khan were conceived, an open *sabhāmaṇḍapa* with a cella at the centre satisfied the needs of Hindu worship. As this became more elaborate, a separate cella had to be built, which was not placed within the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* proper, but outside it, as was done at Tārabasappā.

NARAYAN TEMPLE



GP-7. Ground-plan of Nārāyaṇ temple

Plan (GP-7)

The Nārāyaṇ temple, which stands facing the east, is only a few yards away from Lad Khan, in the north-east direction. Its ground-plan (GP-7) is similar to the Tārabasappā temple, with slight modifications here and there. The entrance to the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* is through a pillared porch. The roof of this portico is supported by four pillars. Of these, the north pillar has a Kanarese inscription of ten lines. The pillars of the portico are square in section and have four-sided capitals. The roof of the porch is flat, with overhanging heavy canopies on the east, north and south. On the right of the entrance pillars is a *kakṣāsana*. A similar one on the left side is now missing.

Entrance

The entrance doorway consists of two small pilasters in between the door-jambs of a lotus-petal design.

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This doorway, however, may be a later addition. The *sabhāmaṇḍapa* is in the shape of a square, 22′ 8½″ in length and 22′ 6½″ in breadth. The ceiling of the main hall is flat, supported by four pillars of uneven

Pillars proportions and twelve pilasters on the four sides. The pillars near the front entrance are 9′ by 9′, while those nearer the shrine entrance are 1′ 11″ by 1′ 11″. The four central pillars rest on a slightly upraised platform. Compared to the size of the temple, the ceiling seems very low. The pillars also are squat, their height being only just 6′ 2″. Compared to their height, their capitals appear too big, as they are 5′ or 6′ in length. The pillars have no base and are square in section. Above the middle of the shaft is a box-like kiosk. The shaft above this is again square in section. On top is the huge two-sided capital. The pillars are plain. Once the ceiling of the roof was covered with floral motifs and divine figures, of which a few still remain.

Walls The exterior walls of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* are plain. These are built of huge rectangular blocks of stone, piled up vertically, with heavy mouldings near the top.

Shrine The shrine doorway is elaborately carved (Pl. 17). Over the dedicatory block is a winged man-Garuḍa in a flying posture, holding in his two hands the tails of *Nāgas* whose coils come down over the door-jambs. On either side of the door-jambs, at the bottom, are carved male *chaurī*-bearers. Floral designs and lattice work are also sculptured on the doorway. Above the lintel are three large *Chaitya*-arches. In the central one is Sūrya in *padmāsana*.

The shrine itself is entered through a doorway that is 2′ 10″ in breadth. It is not yet a square, being 8′ 9″ in breadth and 9′ 6″ in length. It is very important to note that most of the shrines at Aihole are not square in shape, whereas all the shrines of the temples of the Gupta period, like those at Tigawa, Nachna-Kuthra, Deogarh, etc., are square. The idea that the shrine must be a square came later. 'The shape of the Vāstu for gods and Brahmans is prescribed as square' (*Mayamata*, III, 1). Square denotes the 'dyau' or heaven world. In the square sacrificial pit burns the *āhavanīya* fire. At Aihole this idea did not prevail and this would suggest that the Aihole temples were probably earlier than those at Tigawa, Nachna-Kuthra and Deogarh.

A peculiar feature of the shrine are the four pillars that support its ceiling. This is not seen anywhere in the earlier constructions. It is also not repeated in later temple structures. Of these pillars, those at the back are square in section, those in the front are square at the base

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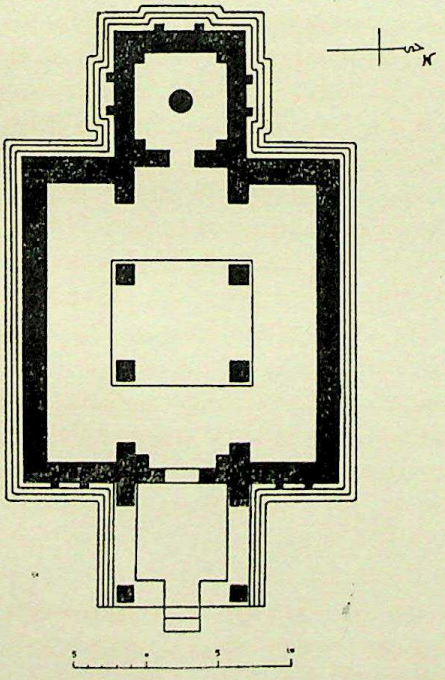
and have octagonal shafts. In the shrine is a loose image of Sūrya in black polished stone, fixed in a *liṅga* pedestal. He is flanked on the two sides by Ushā and Pratyushā. Three niches have been made on the exterior wall of the shrine on the north, south and west. But no deities are seen inside them today. Perhaps they were removed in a later period. The curvilinear type of *śikhara* over the shrine shows *Chaitya*-arch mouldings and at the corners, *āmalakas* sandwiched between mouldings.

HUCHCHAPPAYYA-GUDI

Plan (GP-8)

Another temple which belongs to this group is the Huchchappayyā-gudī, which stands facing the east (Pl. 18). It has a plan (GP-8) similar to Tārabasappā and Nārāyaṇ temples and is assignable to the same period. It has a pillared portico, a main hall, and a detached shrine. The temple stands on a moulded plinth and has an unassuming plain exterior that gives one no idea of the rich sculptures and exquisite carving within.



GP-8. Ground-plan of Huchchappayyā-gudi

The *mukhamaṇḍapa* is supported by two pillars and two pilasters, with an inscription in Kanarese carved on the pilaster on the right. On the two sides of the entrance portico can be seen the *Nidhis*, *Padma Nidhi* on the left and *Saṅkha Nidhi* on the right, both seated in the *ardha-paryaṅkāsana*. The portico is 7′ 10″ in breadth and 8′ 3″ in length. The *kakśāsanas* have elephants and lions carved on them. The eaves of the portico roof show more lions and elephants a little above. The roof of the portico is flat, and so also is the roof of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa*. The detached shrine has an imposing *śikhara* of the curvilinear type. The successive mouldings of the *śikhara* have beautiful *Chaitya*-arches carved upon them, with

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āmalaka-śila corners after every two mouldings. The *āmalaka-śila* on the top and the finial have now fallen, yet the *śikhara* retains its pristine majesty.

Doorway The lintel of the door of the main hall has a beautiful man-Garuḍa in a flying posture, holding two *Nāga* tails in his two hands (Pl. 19). The coils of the cobras make a decorative design for the door-jambs, with the upturned *Nāgas* shown below in the *namaskāra-mudrā*. The door-frame has geometric and floral designs and two pilasters with a square base on the sides. The shafts have lotus medallions at the base, then a vertical floral band going up, followed by a decorative band, another vertical ascending floral band, beaded festoons above, then lotus medallion again, the moulded neck and the capital above this. On these pilasters and the man-Garuḍa are *Chaitya*-arches forming a trefoil design, the arches above the pilasters being topped by *āmalakas*. In between these *Chaitya*-like arches are seen flying couples carrying offerings for the deity of the temple.

Sabha-mandapa The *sabhāmaṇḍapa* is supported by six pillars and two pilasters. These divide the main hall into a central nave leading to the detached shrine, and two side aisles. The hall is almost a square, 24′ 3″ in breadth and 24′ in depth. A large number of sculptures, mainly Śaivite, can be seen inside but these might be later additions. The pillars in the hall are plain, being square in section with huge two-sided capitals. What, however, attracts attention are the elaborately carved entablatures and cross-beams (Pl. 20). The former shows dwarfs in every conceivable posture and mood (Pl. 21). The cross-beams are supported by *Yālis*.

Shrine door Compared to the entrance door of the main hall, the shrine door is very plain. It has, however, a flying man-Garuḍa on the lintel holding two *Nāga* tails in his hands. The coils of the cobras have not yet been worked upon. The door-frame is plain. It is obvious that when the work on the temple commenced, this was on the orders of somebody with Śaivite affiliations. The shrine is now guarded by two very imposing *dvārapālas*; in both cases Śiva is acting as the door-guardian.

Shrine The shrine is not yet a perfect square; it is 8′ 2″ in breadth and 7′ 7″ in depth. Inside the shrine is a *liṅga*. There are three niches in the exterior wall of the shrine. The one in the western wall bears a sculpture of Narasiṁha, the one in the northern wall that of *Gajāsura-vadha-mūrti*, while the niche in the southern wall is empty.

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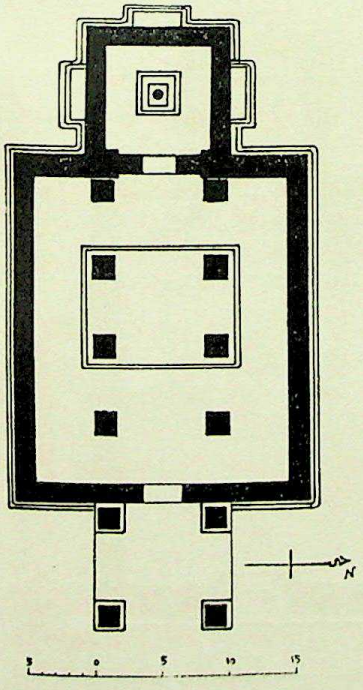
GALAGNATH GROUP

The latest in this group of temples is probably the main temple of the Galagnath group (Pl. 22), which is situated about a mile from the village of Aihole in the southerly direction, on a bank of the river Malaprabhā. About thirty temples were erected here, many of which are in a ruined condition today. The main temple, dedicated to Galagnath, is curvilinear, has an entrance portico, a central hall, and a detached shrine (GP-9). This temple stands on a low plinth, consisting of rectangular stone blocks placed one on the other. The finial over the *śikhara* is missing. A huge sculptured slab of Vishṇu on Garuḍa with attendants and devotees below and flying couples above, is in front on the *śikhara*, over the roof of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa*.

Temple (GP-9)

The temple stands facing the east and is entered through a pillared portico (9′ 7″ × 9′ 7″). On the left of this is a loose four-handed sculpture of Śiva as *dvārapāla*. The doorway of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* is 2′ 5″ in breadth. The *sabhāmaṇḍapa* itself is in the shape of a rectangle, 18′ 10½″ in breadth and 23′ 3″ in length. Its ceiling is supported by eight pillars set in two rows which run parallel, dividing the main hall into a central nave and two side aisles. The pillars are square in section and have no decorations except for unfinished medallions and two-sided capitals. The four central pillars of the main hall, which stand on a slightly elevated platform, form a rectangle 11′ 2½″ in breadth and 9′ 2½″ in length. A heavy entablature with floral motifs and mouldings rests on these pillars. Two cross-beams, on which are carved floral motifs, rest on the entablature. The ceiling in front of the shrine-door contains a mutilated slab on which is carved a three-faced Brahmā, mounted on a goose (*Haṁsa*), and seated in the *savyalalitāsana*. In the main hall, at the left, is a Mātṛika slab.

Sabha-mandapa



GP-9. Ground-plan of a temple in the Galagnath group

The shrine entrance is 2′ 3″ in breadth. The dedicatory block of the shrine door-

Shrine

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way is adorned with a flying man-Garuḍa shown holding two *Nāgas* in his hands. The door-jambs on each side contain beautiful Gaṅgā and Yamunā figures. Nine miniature *śikhara*-motifs are carved in three rows above the dedicatory block, with figures inside *Chaitya*-windows. The shrine is not yet an exact square, being 7′ 2″ in breadth and 8′ 3″ in length. Besides, at two corners, there are offsets that break its squarish shape. Inside is a *liṅga*. The exterior walls of the shrine have three niches, about 3′ 10″ in breadth, on the three sides.

The rectangular shape of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa*, with its arrangement of pillars, is a departure from the earlier examples where the *sabhāmaṇḍapas* are square. The rectangular shape would, therefore, indicate that this temple of the Galagnath group is the latest of the temples just described.

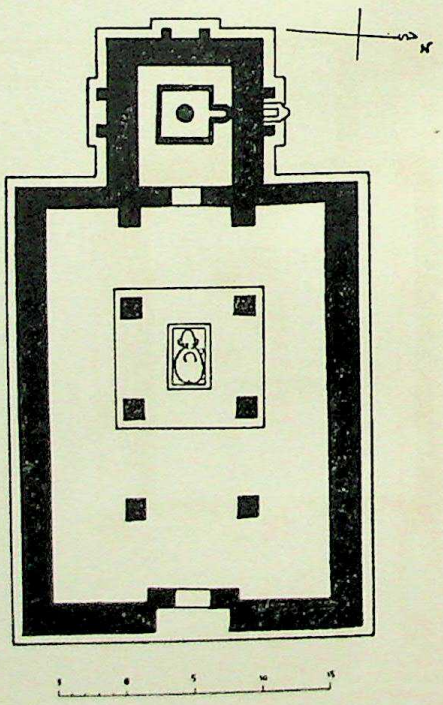
HUCHCHAPPAYYA MATHA

Another temple, similar in plan to the temple in the Galagnath group described above, is the Huchchappayyā *Matha* (GP-10). Here, however, the *mukhamaṇḍapa* is absent; but otherwise its plan greatly resembles that of the temple just described. Its general plan shows a rectangular *sabhāmaṇḍapa* and a detached rectangular *garbhagṛiha*, topped by a curvilinear *śikhara*.

Plan (GP-10)

Main hall

The entrance-door of the main hall has a floral design on the dedicatory block, which is rather unusual. The main hall is divided into a central nave and two side aisles by two rows of pillars that run parallel to each other. The ceiling of the main hall is supported by six pillars and two pilasters. In between the four central pillars is placed a *Nandī*, seated facing the shrine. There is a Kanarese inscription of twenty-two lines on the



GP-10. Ground-plan of Huchchappayyā Matha

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second pillar on the left. Another inscription of four lines is noticed on the first pillar on the left. The rectangular hall is 20′ 2″ in breadth and 29′ 9″ in depth.

Sculptures

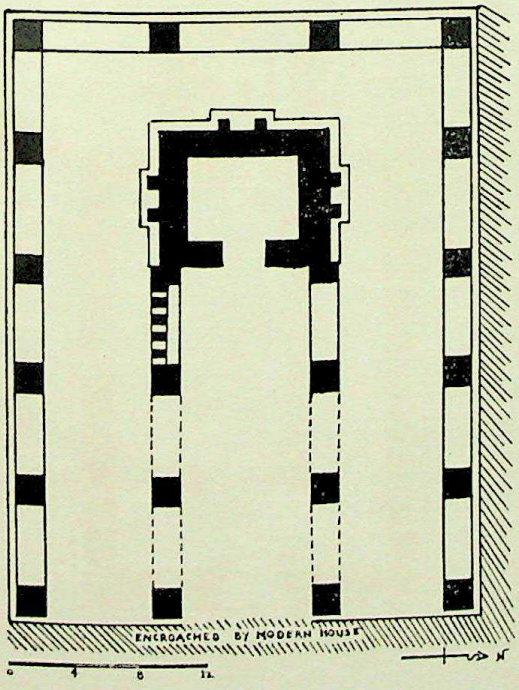
A number of sculptures are carved on the pilasters of the shrine door. Amorous couples are found on the eastern faces of these pilasters. On the left pilaster is a sculpture of Śiva acting as *dvārapāla*, accompanied by a standing Gaṇeśa. On the dedicatory block of the shrine is a man-Garuḍa. The shrine is rectangular in shape, being 6′ 9″ in breadth and 8′ 11″ in depth.

GAUDAR-GUDI TEMPLE

In all the temples studied so far, an important feature of later Hindu temple architecture is missing. This is the circumambulatory passage. The absence of this *pradakṣiṇā patha* is indicative of their early construction.

The first temple that makes a departure from this early architectural tradition is the Gaudar-gudī (Pl. 23) which stands facing the east, south-east of Lad Khan. A huge tank lies on the right side of this temple, which is now in a ruined condition as its general view reveals. Its ground-plan (GP-11), however, is important since it marks a significant development in Hindu architectural tradition. For the first time a circumambulatory passage appears round the *garbhagṛiha*. In the examples studied so far, there is no arrangement for the *pradakṣiṇā*. At Gaudar-gudī, this arrangement has been made.

Plan (GP-11)



GP-11. Ground-plan of Gaudar-gudī

Pillars

Another peculiar feature of this temple is its pillar

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support. Like the Lad Khan, the ceiling of this temple is supported by heavy pillars all round. Sixteen pillars, squat in size, squarish in section and heavy in construction, are built all round the temple to support the sloping roof. All round, except the front entrance, are also built low *āsanas*. In front of the entrance is a huge free sculpture of a *Nidhi*. There are four more pillars in the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* with heavy capitals that support the ceiling. These four pillars of the hall divide it into a central nave and two side aisles.

The entablature above the heavy and plain pillars is very decorative. Huge floral motifs in the round are carved all along the former. In another band above are carved more floral motifs interspersed with human and animal sculptures. Still above, in another decorative band, are depicted open-mouthed *makarās* inside decorative motifs. Above this band, issuing out of the entablature false stone beams can be seen. Still above this are carved *Chaitya*-arches with human heads inside them.

Doorway sculpture

The doorway of the shrine is beautifully decorated (Pls. 24, 25). The door-jambs are all filled with beautiful and delicately done floral carving. Up on the lintel is a charming figure of a Garuḍa in human form, with wings spread out on the sides. The coils of the *Nāgas* form part of the door-jambs, while the *Nāga* human heads are seen near the bottom of the shrine doorway. They are both three-headed and in an attitude of adoration. On either side of the doorway are pilasters with decorative motifs towards the neck. The latter is formed by decorative *pūrṇakalaśas*

Sikharas

above which are the capitals, both the capitals supporting Dravidian type *śikharas*. These storeyed *śikharas* are topped by beautifully carved *āmalakas*, topped by *kalaśas*. The Dravidian type *śikhara* is seen in such a developed form here that one gets the impression that it evolved here in the Deccan itself, and was not an importation from the southern country, just as the northern style *śikhara* was not an importation from the north. The storeys or *bhūmis* here are so perfectly carved that it is difficult to accept the theory of a southern or northern importation of architectural ideas, motifs and traditions. In front of these *śikharas*,

Chaitya-arches

inside *Chaitya*-arches, are carved female figures standing gracefully reclined on one leg, accompanied by female dwarfs on either side. In between these two *śikharas* is a huge trefoil type of *Chaitya* design in which is carved a beautiful sculpture of Mahālakshmī, seated in *padmāsana* on a lotus flower, and shown holding lotus flowers in her hands. Two elephants are seen in the pond below. Two more are on the two sides of Mahālakshmī, pouring water over her. In between these *Chaitya*-

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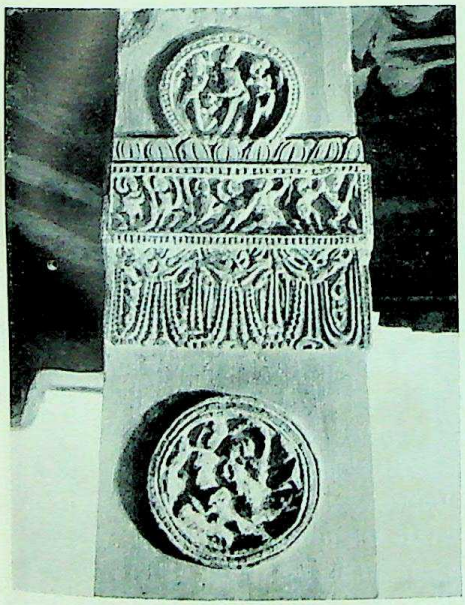

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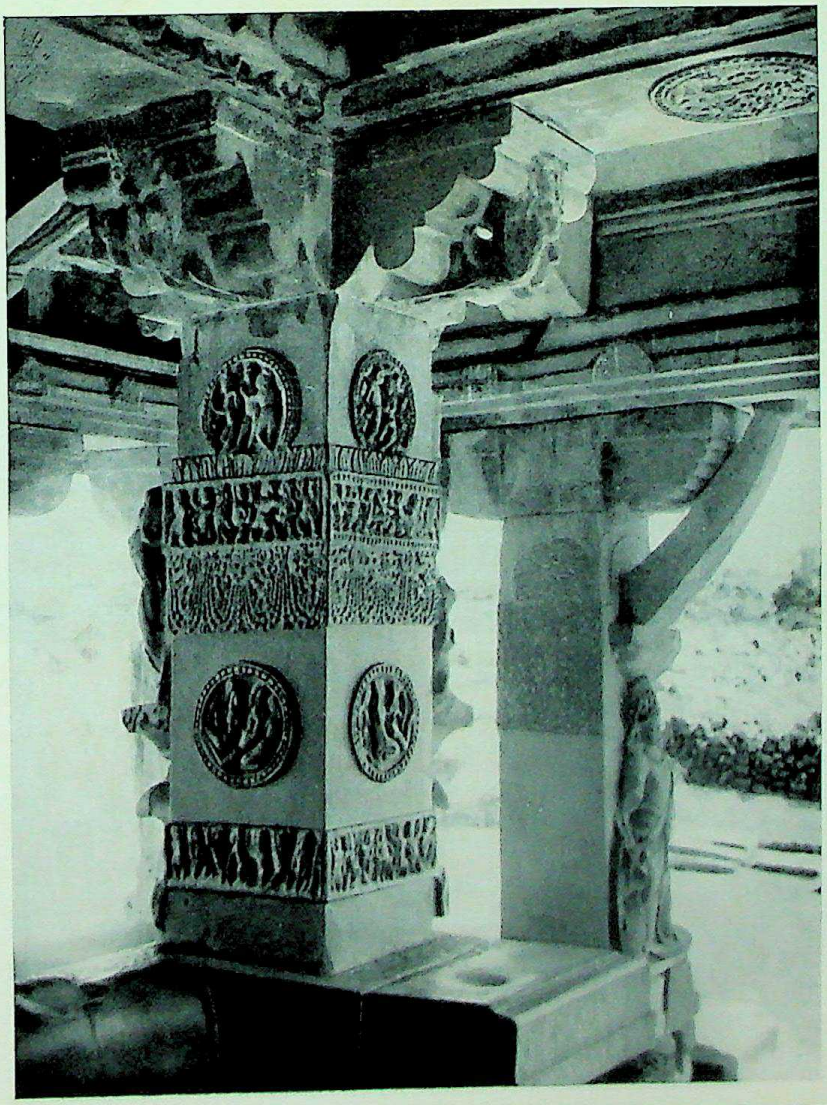
36. Durgā temple. Details of pillar.
37. Durgā temple. Details of sculpture on a pillar.
38. Durgā temple. Details of sculpture on a pillar.



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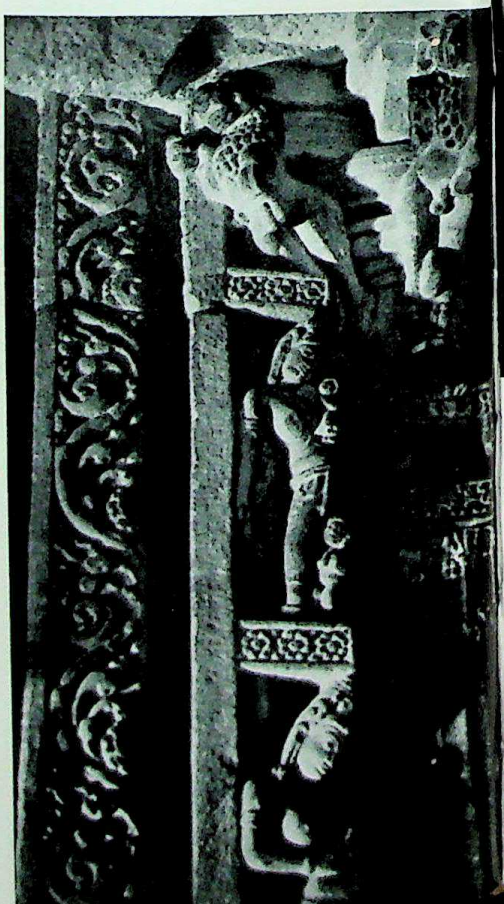
39. Durgā temple. Details of ceiling.
40. Durgā temple. Sculptures on entrance doorway.

39



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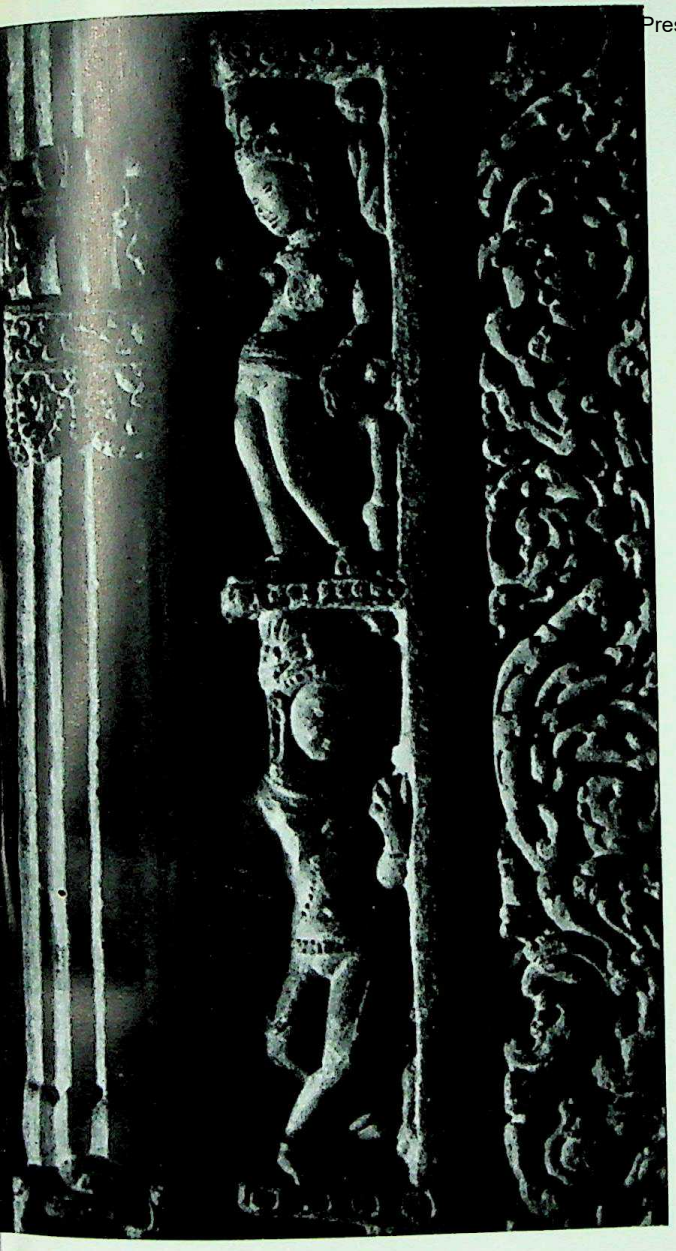

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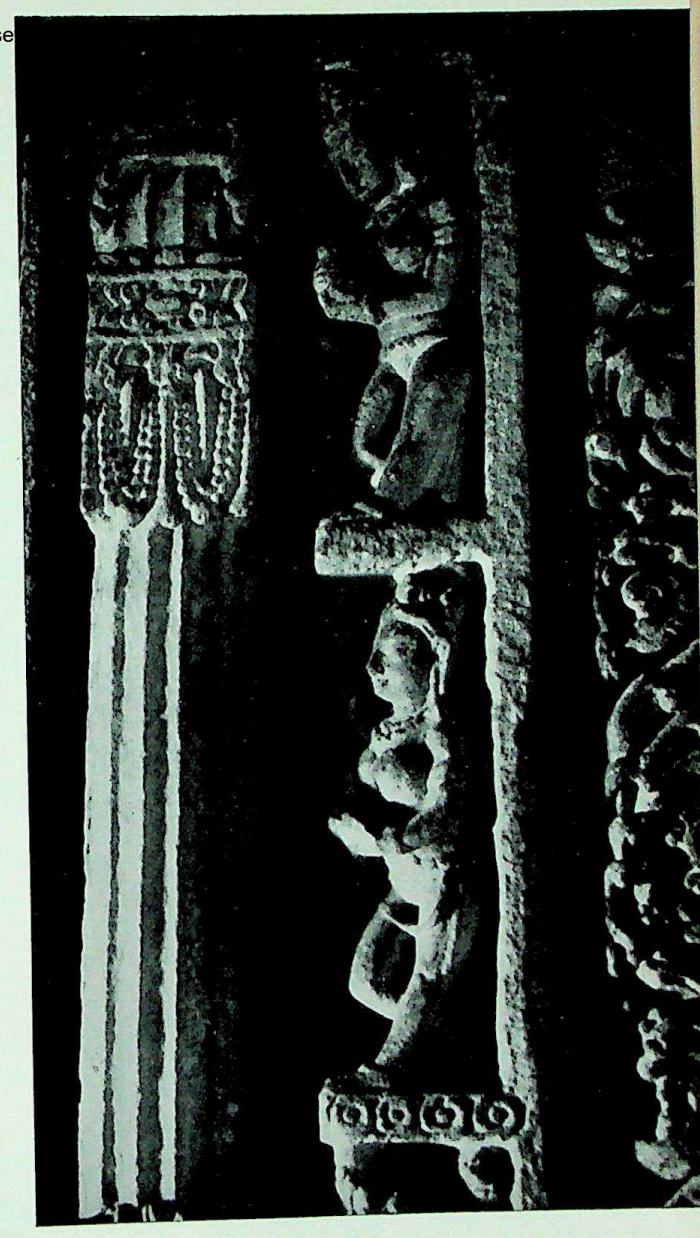

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41. Durgā temple. Details of entrance doorway.
42. Durgā temple. Sculptures on the entrance doorway.

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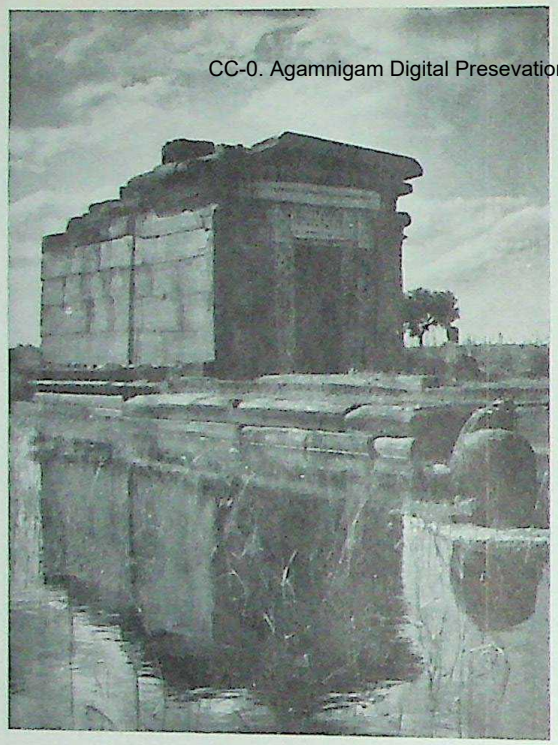
43. Temple adjoining Chikka gudī. General view.

44. Ambiger-gudī. General view.



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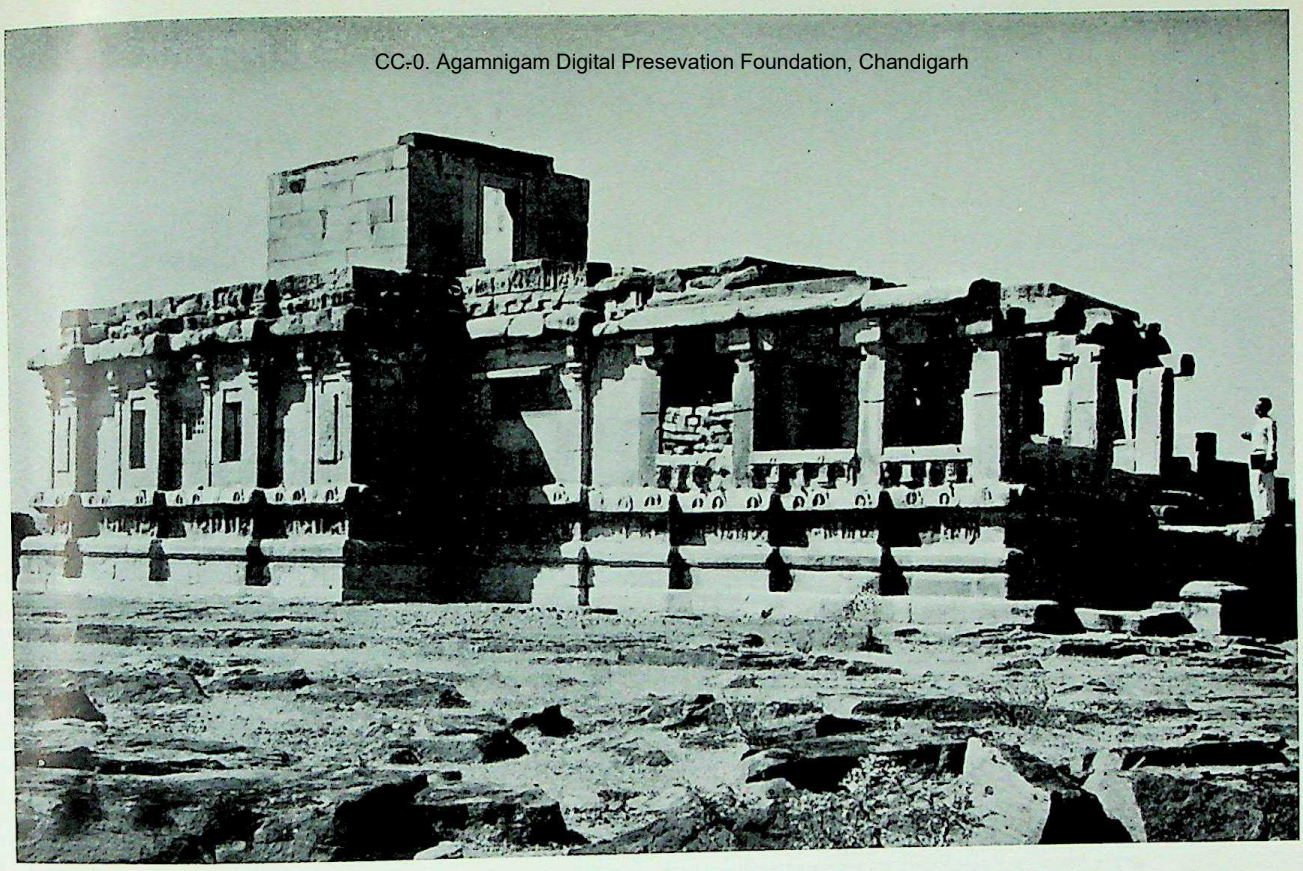

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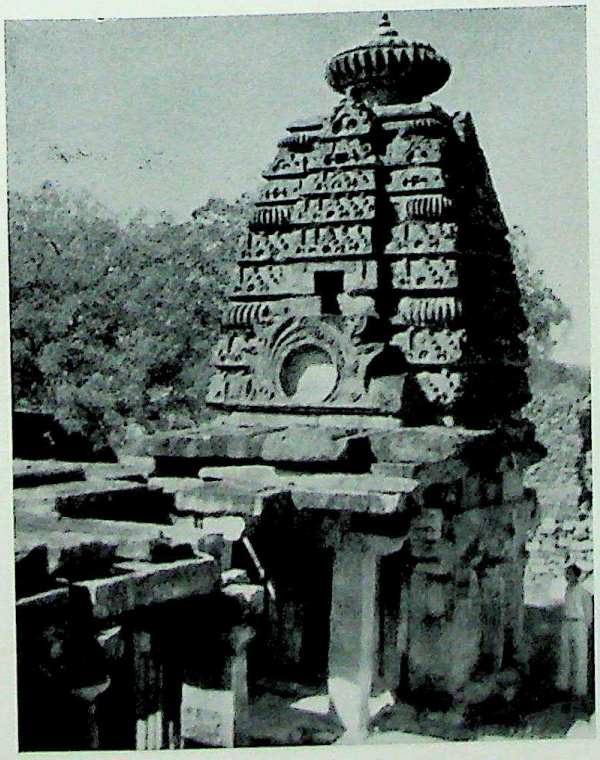

45. Meguti temple. General view.
46. Chakra-gudī. General view.

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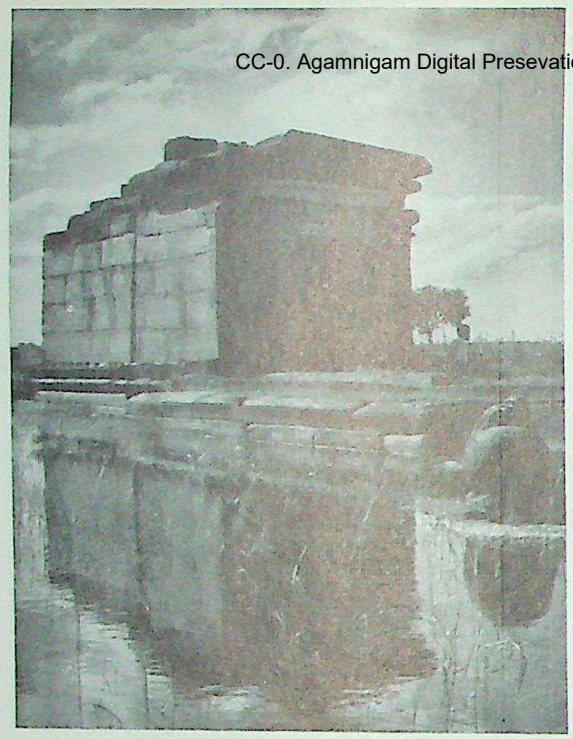
43. Temple adjoining Chikka gudī. General view.
44. Ambiger-gudī. General view.



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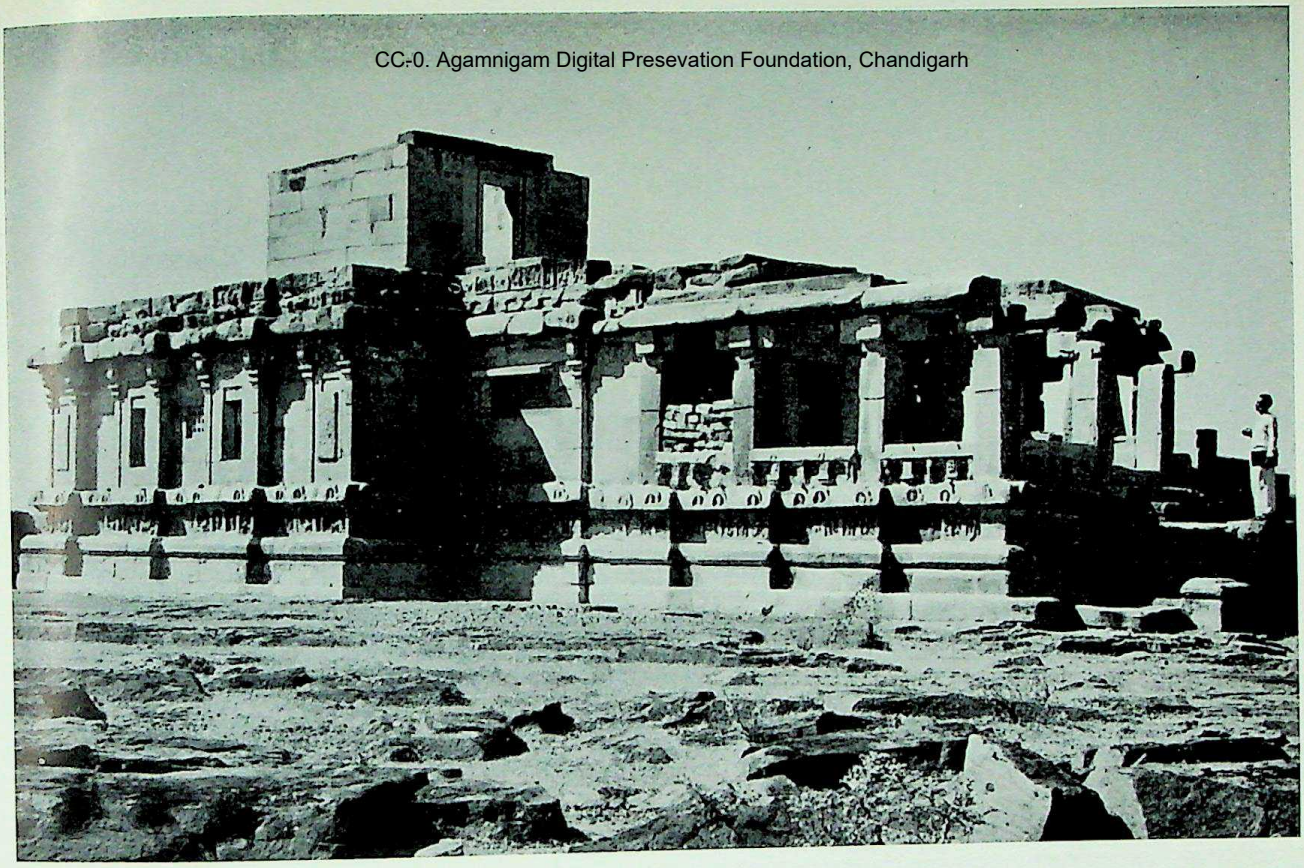

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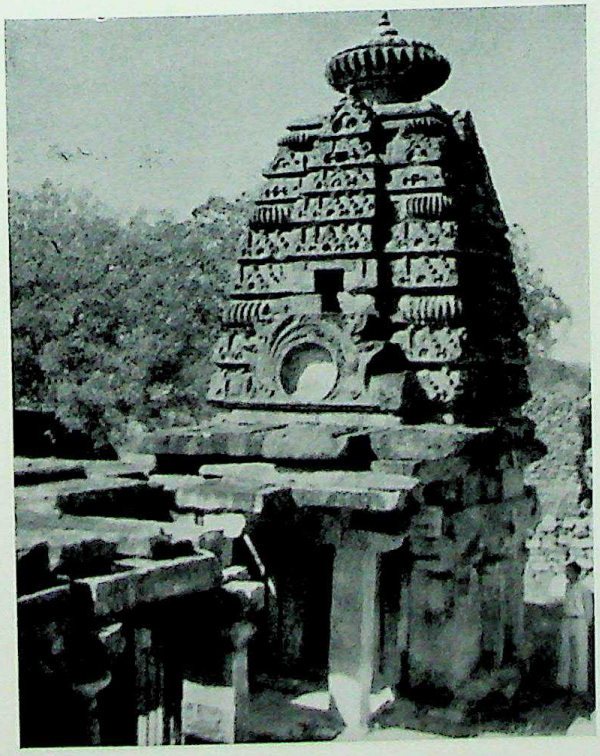

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45. Meguti temple. General view.
46. Chakra-gudī. General view.

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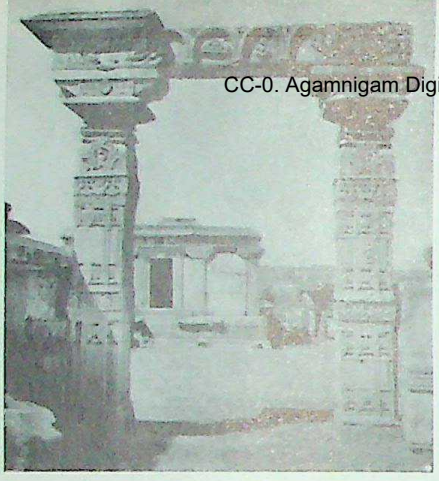

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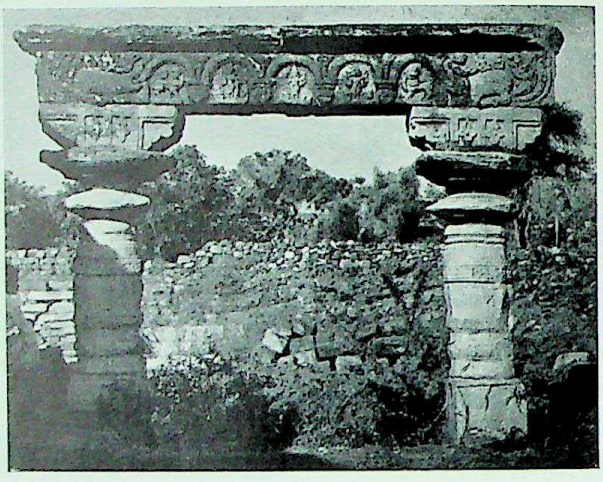

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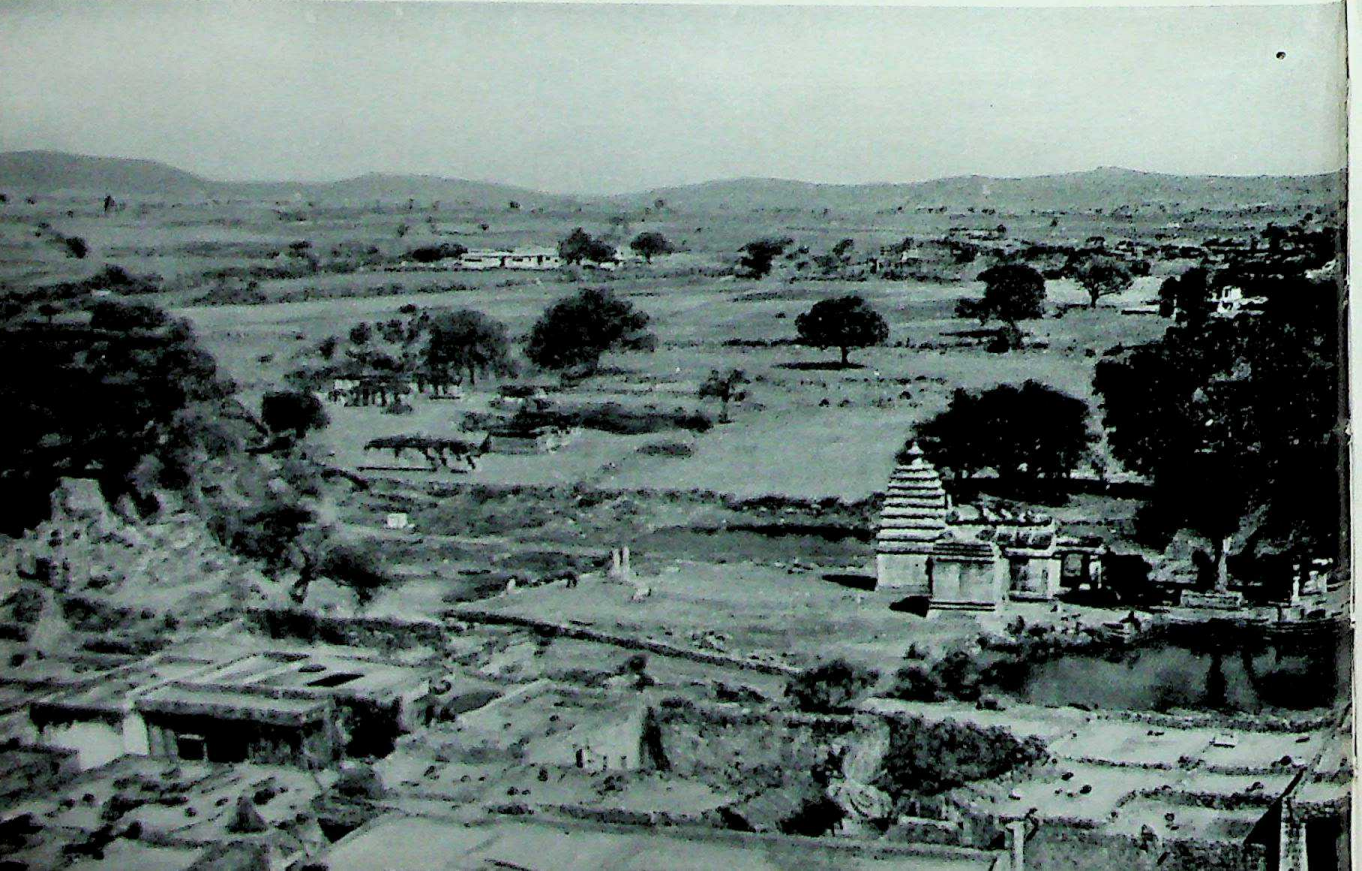
47. Galagnath group. Sculptured torana.
48. Veṇiyāvar group of temples. Makara torana.
49. Mallikārjuna and Jyoterlinga group of temples. General view.

49



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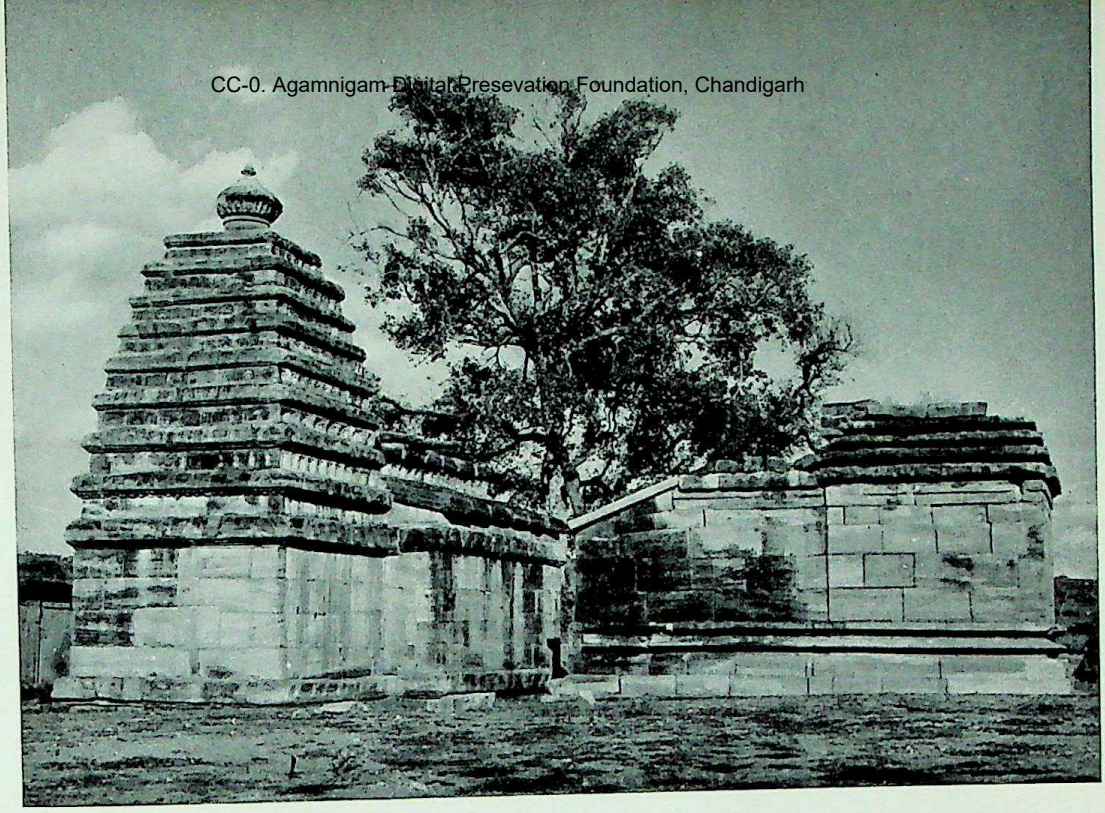

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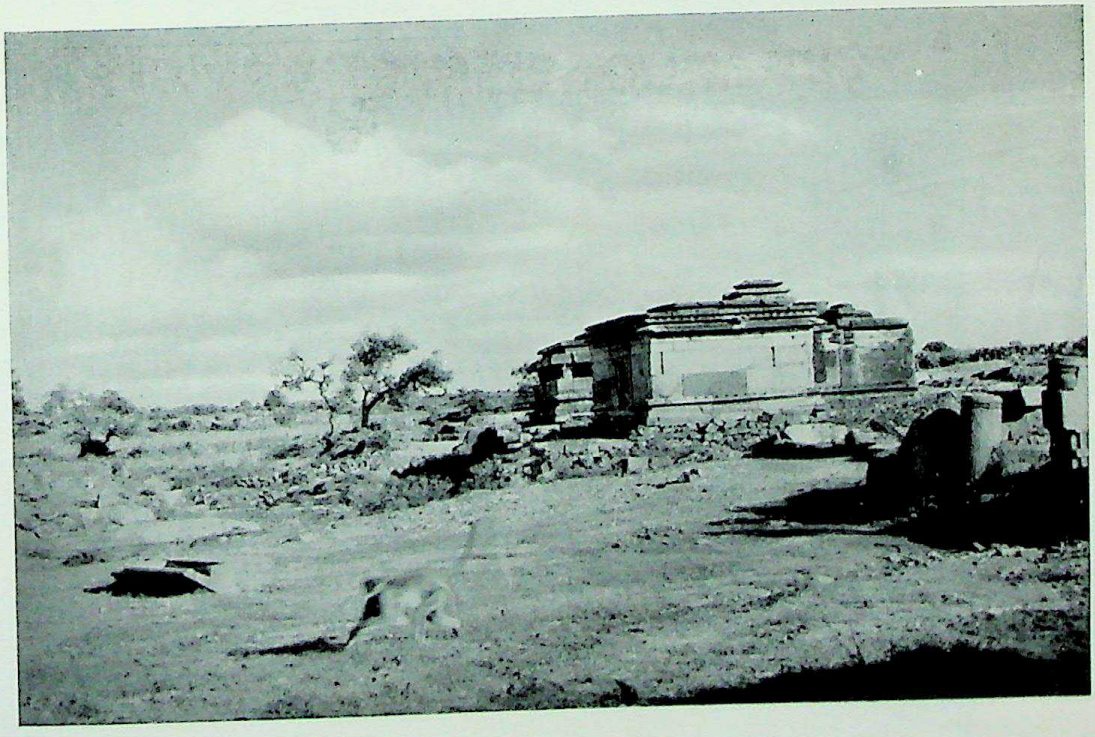

51

50. Mallikārjuna group of temples. General view.
51. Bitte gudī. General view.

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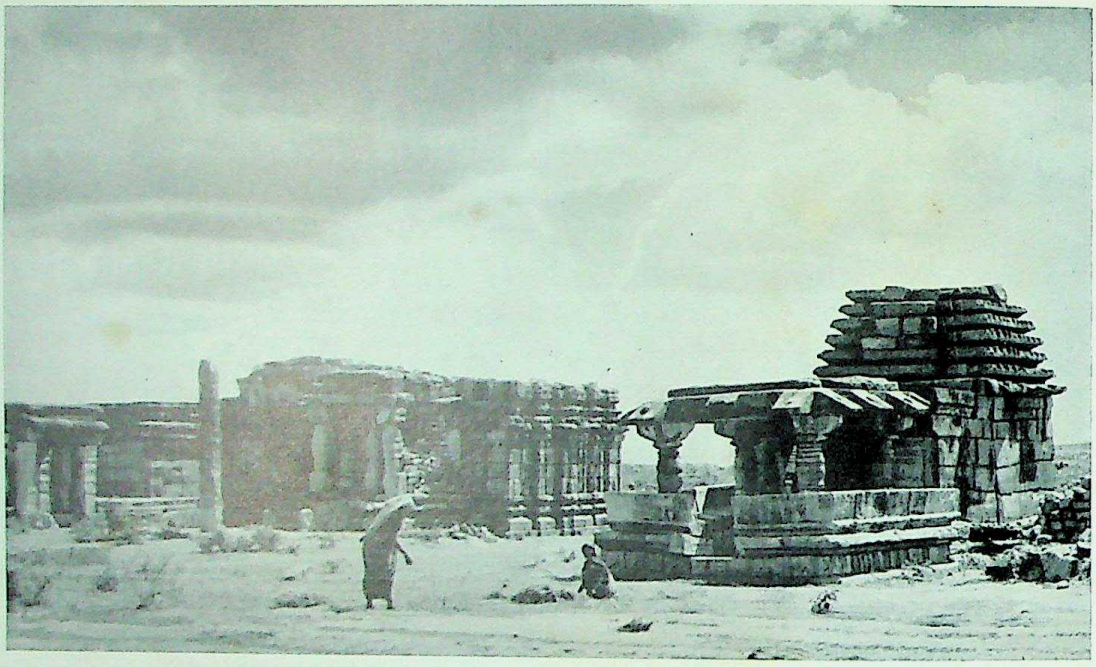
52. Veṇiyavār group of temples. General view.
53. Veṇiyavār group of temples. General view from another angle.



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arches are smaller ones. This profusion of *Chaitya*-arches in these Hindu temples emphasizes a deep Buddhist architectural influence, which persisted in later centuries, both in the north and the south, and formed an important decorative motif in Hindu temple architecture.

Doorway

The doorway shows another decorative band filled with floral motifs. Above the *Chaitya*-arches are seen false stone beams. Above this are still more carved *Chaitya*-motifs. Another band further up depicts dwarfs holding garlands. More false stone beams can be seen near the ceiling.

Shrine

The shrine door is 2′ 7″ in breadth. The shrine itself is rectangular in shape, being 5′ 3″ in length and 6′ 9½″ in breadth. There is no sculpture or *liṅga* inside it. The exterior walls of the shrine have three niches on its three sides for the deposition of images. Over these niches are carved *Chaitya*-arch motifs that are worth noting. The ceiling of the shrine is flat. Above the shrine, however, are three courses of masonry blocks, some with *Chaitya*-motifs, and they give the impression of a *bhūmi*-type *śikhara*.

CHIKKA-GUDI

Another temple that belongs to the type represented by Gaudargudī is Chikka-gudī (Pl. 26). The ground-plan of the temple (GP-12), however, shows that it is a later example; and is much better conceived than the former. It has a pillared portico, a main hall and a *sanctum* surrounded by a circumambulatory passage. The portico is reached through a flight of three steps. Four plain pillars, square in section, support the ceiling, which is flat. The main hall is entered through a door. The four pillars and the two pilasters are beautifully carved. The circumambulatory passage shows three beautiful niches made for receiving images. The passage is lighted by big latticed windows on three sides of the walls of the temple. There are three stone grilles on each side (Pl. 27), separated by squat pillars with huge two-sided capitals. The latticed windows in the middle are larger than those on the sides. The *jalis* (lattices) are square in shape, with tiny lotus flowers carved in between.

Pillars

The pillars that support the main hall are square in section (Pl. 28). At the middle of the shaft are carved beaded festoons issuing out of

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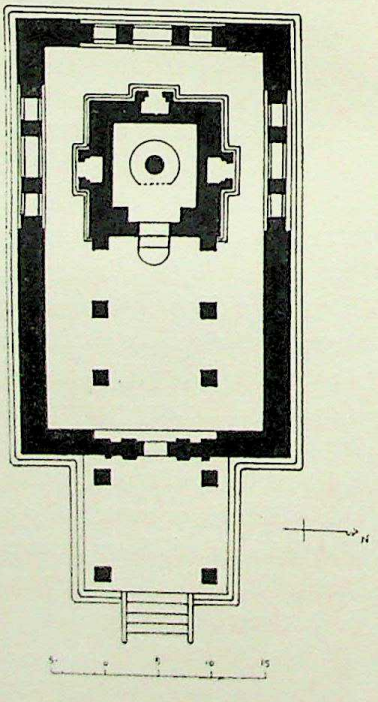
kīrtimukhas, making a fascinating garland design. In between these garlands are *Yālis* mounted by dwarfs. Up above, inside semi-circles, are delicate floral motifs. Floral motifs are also seen at the angles, balancing and harmonizing those descending from above. These plants with flowers, creeping out towards each other make an attractive design and create a beautiful play of light and shade. The shaft above is octagonal. On this is a beautiful full-blown lotus that makes a very attractive decorative design. At the angles is foliage. The capital above is highly decorative. The pilasters on the sides of the shrine show the same design.

Doorway of shrine

The doorway of the shrine has decorative door-jambs with floral motifs. On the lintel is a flying figure of a man-Garuḍa with wings on the sides, and *Nāga* tails in his two hands. Below on the door-jambs are three-headed *Nāgas*, their hands folded in an attitude of adoration. On the two sides of the doorway are river goddesses standing gracefully between the vertical door-frame designs. On two sides of the door-frame are pilasters with vase and foliage necks and capitals. Another vertical band is carved on the sides of the pilasters with round lotus-motifs. The two side pilasters support small *bhūmi*-type *śikharas* with trefoil *Chaitya* motifs carved in front. Inside these arches are seen deities. In the left arch, as one stands facing the shrine, is a standing figure of Brahmā holding a *kamaṇḍalu* in the left hand. His three heads are clearly shown. In the right arch is a standing figure of Vishṇu. In between these two arches is another with a standing figure of Vṛishabhavāhana Śiva. Above these arches are the usual false stone beams.



GP-12. Ground-plan of Chikka-gudi

Ceiling slabs

The ceiling slabs are beautifully sculpted with figures. One ceiling slab shows a big lotus carved in the centre. It is set inside a large square. On all the four sides, at the angles, are carved flying figures. Two of these are now missing. On the two sides of this central square slab are rectangular slabs, separated from

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it by bands of lotus flowers. On one side is a sculpture of Vishṇu on Ananta. Lakshmī is seated at his feet, pressing them. Śrī is near his head. Out of his navel springs Brahmā, seated on a double-petalled lotus in *padmāsana*, holding a lotus, *kamaṇḍalu*, etc., in his hands. Flying figures appear on either side of him. On another side, inside a rectangular slab, is the sculpture of Vishṇu as Trivikrama. Vishṇu is shown here as a Brahmin dwarf. King Bali can be recognized by his royal dress. Above is the giant form of Vishṇu as Trivikrama, who covers the sky and the heaven world and buries Bali underneath the earth with his third step. His left leg is lifted. He holds a sword, a wheel and a cobra in the three right hands, and a conch, bow and shield in the left three hands.

Another ceiling slab has a centrally spread lotus inside a square. Here at the corners are carved *makara* motifs. On one rectangular slab is Śiva dancing the *tāṇḍava*. Pārvatī and Gaṇeśa are shown seated close by. A seated woman artist is seen playing upon drums. The rectangular slab on the other side shows a sculpture of Śiva killing the demon Andhakāsura. His spear has entered the body of the latter, who writhes in agony. Pārvatī is seated close by.

The ceiling slabs project outwards on all the sides. Above these is the sloping roof. In the center is a moulding of a *śikhara* that is now in ruins. This moulding has four perforations—two on the north and two on the south—which light the sculptures of the ceiling slabs, making possible a play of light and shade. The remnants of the *śikhara* suggest that it may have once been curvilinear in shape.

HUCHCHIMALLI-GUDI

Huchchimalli-gudī stands facing the west, close to the new Travellers' Bungalow (Pl. 29). Its architecture marks a step forward from that of Chikki-gudī. In all the temples studied so far, the *antarāla* or ante-chamber has not yet made its appearance. It is at Huchchimalli temple that this new architectural feature first appears. The temple has a *mukhamaṇḍapa*, a *sabhāmaṇḍapa*, an *antarāla*, and a *garbhagṛiha* with a *pradakṣiṇā* passage and stands on a high plinth, 7′ in height. This has one moulding at the base and another about 2′ above, the moulding showing *Chaitya*-motifs with human figures inside. A flight of eight steps leads to the pillared portico. Four simple and plain pillars, without bases or any carving, support the flat roof of the portico, the overhang-

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ing canopies of which curve inwards. Above is a moulding with animals carved at intervals. The offsets and recesses of the moulding also give it a decorative appearance. Round the portico, on the two sides, are *kakṣāsanas*. The *kakṣāsana* slab on the two sides have beautiful *ghata-pallava* carvings (Pl. 30). The portico is 9′ 10″ in breadth and 13′ in length, with an inscription of five lines on the facade, left of the entrance, and another on the right, of one line. The former records a grant of oil to the priest of the temple by Vijayāditya in A.D. 708 (*Indian Antiquary*, VIII, 284).

Door-frame A modern wooden door-frame is fixed to the entrance-door. The original door-frame is highly decorative, with floral motifs carved on the door-jambs. Up on the lintel is a flying man-Garuḍa with wings spread out, holding the tails of two *Nāgas* with their hands in the *namaskāra-mudrā*. Another outside frame has floral motifs. On either side of this are pilasters with *āmalaka*-capitals. On either side of the door-frame are carved the river goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā, with attendants. Of these, Yamunā can be easily identified because of her vehicle tortoise. The *makara* of Gaṅgā is damaged.

Ceiling slab of portico The ceiling slab of the portico has a sculpture of Kārttikeya, seated on his peacock mount. He holds a sword in his right hand and a flower in his left and has a smiling countenance. He is surrounded by flying *gandharvas*, also with smiling faces. Above are two more carrying garlands.

Main hall The main hall is entered through a doorway, 3′ 2″ in breadth. The ceiling of the hall is supported by load-bearing walls and four pillars. The latter are square in section and have no bases. Half way up, a beginning seems to have been made to carve out the pillars. The outlines of half and full medallions can be seen, but the work has been left unfinished. The capitals are two-sided.

Antechamber The hall is separated from the antechamber by stone grilles (Pl. 31) placed in between the two back pillars of the main hall. The door between these *jalis* is plain. The antechamber, however, is well conceived. It, along with the cella, are built on an upraised platform, giving them an attractive elevation. The antechamber is 10′ 6″ in breadth and 5′ 7″ in length.

Ceiling The ceiling of the *antarāla* has a beautiful lotus carved on it while the ceiling over the hall and the antechamber is divided into three bays. The first shows a lotus, the second, a ceiling slab with a big round lotus in

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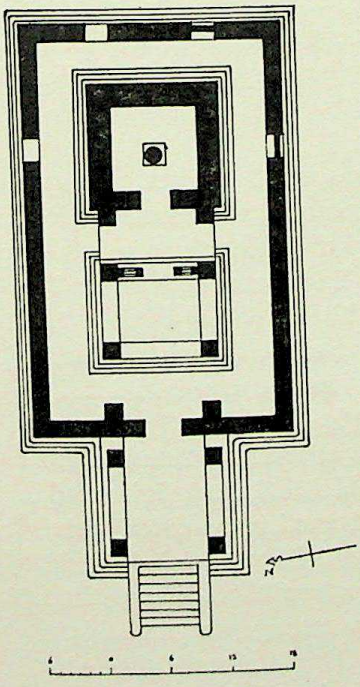
the centre and four smaller lotuses at the corners. The ceiling slab of the hall has sculptures of Śiva on Nandī on the west, Indra on his elephant mount on the east, Vishṇu on an eagle on the south, and Brahma on a goose on the north. These bays are divided by two decorative cross-beams, supported by dwarfs on either side. The entablature shows *Chaitya* designs and some interesting animals alternately.

Shrine

The shrine door has decorative floral motifs. On the lintel is a flying man-Garuḍa holding *Nāga* tails in his two hands. The coils of the *Nāgas* descend, where *Nāga*-humans are depicted with their hands in the *namaskāra mudrā*. On either side of the door are Gaṅgā-Yamunā figures. Inside the shrine is a *liṅga*. An important feature of the shrine is that it is almost a square, being 8′ ½″ in breadth and 8′ 4½″ in length. This suggests the late construction of the temple itself. As the rituals of Hindu worship were gradually evolving, it was slowly being realized that the *garbhagṛiha* should be a square, in imitation of the *Ahavaniya* or *Dyau* fire, from which all other fires emanate. The exterior walls of the shrine have a moulding at the base with *Chaitya*-arch motifs. On the three sides of the circumambulatory passage are fixed perforated windows, one each in the north and south walls and two on the eastern back wall. One of these has the stone grille missing and this has been replaced by a wire-netting.



GP-13. *Ground-plan of Huchchi-malli-gudi*

Roof

The roof of the temple has a moulding going round the sides, with *kudu* motifs. Above, the roof slopes to the sides but at the centre, the roof is elevated by a decorative screen and moulding. The *śikhara* is over the *garbhagṛiha* and is curvilinear in shape. *The āmalaka-śila*, which once must have formed a part of the *śikhara*, is seen lying below. In the front, in a *Chaitya*-arch panel made in the *śikhara*, is a beautiful sculpture of Śiva dancing the *Tāṇḍava*.

A number of free sculptures are seen in the temple. A Saptamatṛika slab is kept in the main hall, on the right of the entrance. Another loose sculpture of Dancing Śiva is near the *antarāla*, on the right.

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The temple of Huchchimalli is the latest in this group of temples. Its architecture for the first time makes provision for an antechamber before the cella, and this is a definite development in the temple architecture of the Hindus at Aihole. The ground-plan (GP-13) and architecture of Huchchimalli has some resemblance to the Malegetti Śivalaya of Bādāmi.

DURGA TEMPLE

One of the finest temples at Aihole is the Durgā temple, which has been built within an enclosure wall, and stands facing the east. Its most striking feature is its imitation of Buddhist *Chaitya* architecture, lending it great charm and dignity (Pls. 32, 33, 34). It has an apsidal plan (GP-14).

When at Aihole, under the patronage of the early Chālukya kings, the structural temple began to evolve and discover its own form, it was an imitation of rock-cut architecture in the beginning. The technique of masonry construction was new. Constructions of brick and mortar were known, but the technique of piling stone upon stone in vertical fashion was an innovation. When these early constructions were undertaken, no cementing mortar was used. Stones were fixed into each other by making grooves and offsets. The ceiling was supported by building load-bearing walls and pillars.

Chikka-Mahakuta

The experiment at Aihole in building an apsidal-plan temple was in no sense a new one. Close to Aihole, at a place called Chikka-Mahākūṭa near Bādāmi, the first experiment had already been made. Other examples were also extant. One was the Trivikrama temple at Ter, originally a Buddhist structural temple with the *Chaitya* plan, later appropriated for Hindu worship. Another was at Chezarla, in the Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh. But the Ter temple was in brick. At Chikka-Mahākūṭa, however, a structural temple on the *Chaitya* plan was built in stone masonry. Here, since the technique was new, the experiment was made in a halting manner. The Chikka-Mahākūṭa temple is small in size, and unpretentious. Its successful construction, however, gave a new confidence to the Chālukya architect and he was emboldened to undertake a more ambitious temple. It was natural that this experiment should be made at Aihole, where Chālukya patronage was available.

General description

The Durgā temple stands majestically facing the east and as one enters the village of Aihole, this is the most imposing structure that strikes

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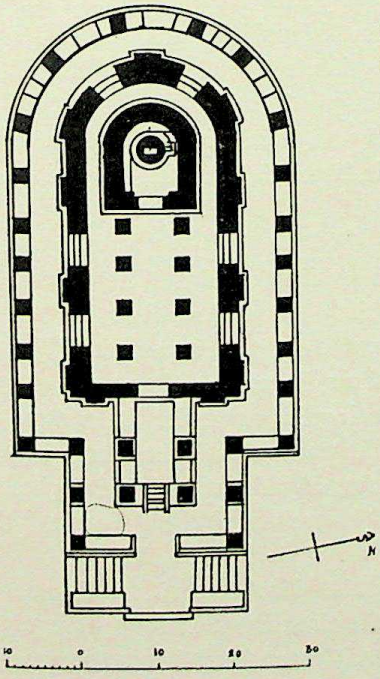
the eye. The curvilinear *śikhara* on the *garbhagṛiha*, the apsidal plan of the temple and its high moulded *adhisthāna* are noticeable immediately. The temple is entered through two flights of steps on the east, leading to the imposing portico. It has a *mukhamaṇḍapa*, a *sabhamaṇḍapa*, and a *garbhagṛiha*, with a *pradakṣiṇā* passage. Another feature of the temple is a colonnaded corridor (Pl. 35) that runs round the entire temple, lending great charm and dignity to it. One feature seen at Huchchimalli temple is absent here. That is the *antarāla*. But it has one feature that the Huchchimalli does not have—the pillared corridor going all round the temple.

Portico pillars

The pillars of the portico are very imposing, standing on the parapet wall that runs round the columned corridor. Those at the entrance have curved bracket supports. The pillars are square in section, with two-sided or three-sided capitals. On the outside of all these columns are carved beautiful sculptures of amorous couples.

Mukhamandapa

The *mukhamaṇḍapa* proper is supported by four squat pillars resting on the parapet wall of the portico. A flight of steps from the corridor leads to this portico within a portico. The supporting pillars have beautiful carvings inside medallions and on bands going round the pillars (Pls. 36, 37, 38). The frieze work inside the bands, the amorous couples inside the medallions, and the beaded festoons issuing from *makara*-mouths are all very fascinating. The capitals of these pillars are four-sided and have mouldings. The cross-beams also have sculptured medallions with friezes inside.



GP-14. Ground-plan of Durga temple

Ceiling of mukhamandapa

The decorative slabs on the ceiling of the *mukhamaṇḍapa* are worthy of note. On one huge stone slab are carved two circles, one inside the other, the inner circle showing fishes forming the spokes of the central wheel. In between the two circles is carved a floral design. On another ceiling slab, which is rectangular in shape, is carved a beautiful frieze of a seven-headed *Nāga*, holding a beautiful garland

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in his right hand and a bouquet in his left (Pl. 39). On his right are two *Nāgiṇis*, with oval faces and sharp features that are strikingly charming.

Door of mukha-mandapa

The entrance door of the *mukhamaṇḍapa*, which leads to the main hall, is extremely decorative (Pls. 40, 41, 42). The dedicatory block shows a well-carved man-Garuḍa in a flying posture, with the wings spread on the two sides of the door-jambs down below. At intervals are upturned bodies of *Nāgas* in the *namaskāra* attitude. The door-jamb is carved with floral motifs and there are two fluted pilasters on either side. These show the *pūrṇakalaśas* (the bowls of plenty) and beaded festoons at regular intervals. Next to these, on either side, are sculptures of females in amorous postures. Next to these again are decorative bands. Above the lintel are seen *bhūmi*-type *śikharas*. Below, on the door-jamb, are carved river-goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā, the former being on the right and the latter on the left.

Hall

The entrance doorway is 3′ 11″ wide . The main hall is divided into a central nave and two side aisles by two rows of colonnades, four in each row, that run parallel to each other. The main hall is 20′ 2½″ in breadth and 24′ 10½″ in length, with the pillars 8′ apart. The circumambulatory passage is 20′ 11″ in depth and is apsidal.

The pillars in the hall are square in section, are without bases, and have two-sided capitals. The shrine-door is 3′ wide. It has the usual man-Garuḍa on the dedicatory block, holding *Nāga* tails in his two hands. The shrine itself is 10′ 5″ in depth and 9′ in breadth, and has an apsidal back.

Corridor

There is a pillared corridor round the entire temple. The pillars, squat in shape and square in section, are thirty-three in number, including those of the outside portico. They rest on the parapet wall that runs round the temple. These pillars show broad bands round the middle and outlines of medallions. No carving, however, has been done on them. Their capitals are two-sided. The parapet wall has a number of sculptures of dwarfs supporting the pillars, of *yālis* standing upright, and of figures in false shrines topped by *Chaitya*-arches.

Niches

A number of niches have been made in the pillared corridors. These are in the exterior walls of the main hall and the circumambulatory passage. These panels are separated by pilasters, with moulded bases, square shafts, offsets, necks and moulded abaci. Each niche has floral carving on its base and the *adhishthāna* below. The abaci above are topped by

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moulded capitals supporting three-tiered slabs. Above this are storeyed *śikharas* showing stylised lions, with *Chaitya*-arches in the middle. The top moulding of the *adhisthhāna* also has *Chaitya*-arches with figures carved inside. Below the former, on either side, are carved dwarfs. Slanting cross-beams support the sloping ceiling of the pillared corridor.

Roof

The roof of the temple is better conceived and executed than in most of the examples studied so far. The roof is made up of four tiers, one upon the other. One tier consists of the eave that runs round the entire temple; the second consists of the sloping roof of the columned corridor; the third and fourth form the flat ceiling of the main hall and the shrine.

Sikhara

On the top of the shrine is the curvilinear *śikhara* that is now partially in ruins. Its top portion, along with the *āmalaka* and the *kalaśa* finial has fallen. The remaining portion, however, is enough to give an idea of the *śikhara* as it must have been once. It shows the various tiers with *Chaitya*-arch motifs, and *āmalaka-śilas* at the angles.

OTHER TEMPLES OF THE GALAGNATH GROUP

Temple (GP-15)

A temple which carries the tradition of Huchchimalli-gudī further is the temple from the Galagnath group that stands facing the east (GP-15). In the examples examined so far, excepting the Huchchimalli temple, the *antarāla* is conspicuous by its absence. At Huchchimalli, an *antarāla* has been made in the hall itself. Here at Galagnath, for the first time, a separate *antarāla* is provided. This Galagnath temple has a *sabhāmaṇḍapa*, an *antarāla* and a *garbhagṛiha*. The *mukhamaṇḍapa* and the *pradakṣiṇā patha*, however, are absent. The main hall is entered through a doorway, just 2′ 5″ in width, made in its eastern wall and is reached through a flight of steps. There are two more doorways on the south and the north. A flight of steps leads to the hall through the doorway in the northern side. It has an open porch with no pillars and no ceiling.

Ceiling

The ceiling of the main hall is supported by four pillars set in a square. There are more pillars in the walls of the hall, two in the eastern, two each in the northern and southern and two in the wall leading to the antechamber. The hall itself is almost in the shape of a square, 17′ 3″ in breadth and 18′ in length. The doorway of the antechamber is

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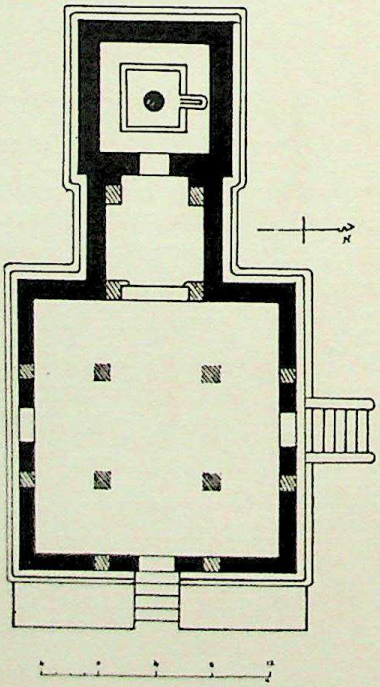
4′ 10″ in width. The *antarāla* is 7′ 4″ in breadth and 7′ 7″ in length ; but its squarish shape is disturbed by four pillar offsets in the four corners.

Shrine

The shrine doorway is 2′ broad. On the lintel is a man-Garuḍa holding *Nāga* tails. The shrine itself, with a *liṅga* inside, is a perfect square, 7′ 8″ by 7′ 8″, for the first time, as required by the later works on *Silpaśāstra*. None of the shrines of Aihole examined so far has a square shape. It is important to remember in this connection that all Gupta temples have shrines which are square. They, therefore, satisfy an important requirement of *Vāstuśāstra*. The works on *Vāstu-Vidyā* had not yet been written when the architectural experiments at Aihole were being made. Temple architecture was still in the process of evolution. The priest-architects of the Chālukyas were, therefore, not bound by any set traditions. In the Northern area, a tradition had been built up by the time the temples ascribed to the Guptas were being built in various parts of Madhya Pradesh. The so-called Gupta temples are spread over a wide area, whereas the Chālukyan effort is confined to a very small region. The experiment at Aihole is, therefore, more integrated. The fact, however, that at Aihole the shrines are not as a rule square, while in the Gupta temples in Madhya Pradesh they are always square, would indicate that the Aihole temples were built earlier or that the Northern tradition had not yet reached the Deccan. In the circumstances it would be difficult to say that the Chālukyas borrowed any architectural motifs from the Guptas.



GP-15. Ground-plan of a temple in the Galagnath group

Another temple

Another temple similar to the one referred to above is the one adjoining Chikki-gudī (Pl. 43). It has a hall which is 13′ 6″ in breadth and 15′ 9″ in length. The *antarāla* is 9′ 6″ in breadth and 8′ in length. The shrine is almost a square, being 9′ 6″ in breadth and 9′ 8″ in length, with four pillar offsets at the corners.

Ambiger-gudi

Still another example of this type is provided by the Ambiger-gudī that

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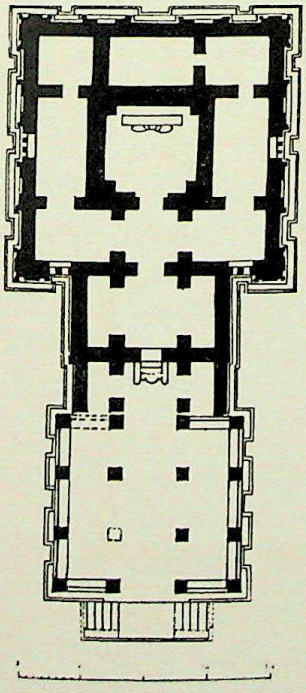
stands facing the east (Pl. 44). It has a main hall supported by four pillars and twelve pilasters, and is 14′ 8″ in breadth and 14′ in length. The antechamber is 8′ 2″ in breadth and 5′ 9″ in length. The shrine inside is a perfect square, 6′ 3″ × 6′ 3″. It has, however, four pillars to support it at the four corners. A peculiar feature of the temple is the pilaster support given to it from the inside, lending it a decorative appearance. The roof of the hall is flat. The *śikhara* over the shrine is storeyed. At its base is a plinth-like moulding with squat pilaster support. Outlines of medallions and *Chaitya*-arches can be seen.

The *sabhāmaṇḍapa* of the temple is entered through a side door. The eastern side is closed by a wall. The entrance door is very decorative. On the lintel is seen a flying man-Garuḍa.

MEGUTI TEMPLE

The final phase in the development of the temple structure is represented by Meguti, which stands in graceful dignity on the imposing eminence of the Meguti hill, about three furlongs east of Aihole village (Pl. 45). This Jain temple was built in the time of Pulakeśin II. The famous Aihole Praśasti is fixed on the eastern wall of the temple and the inscribed slab gives the creation date of the temple as *Saka* 656, i.e., A.D. 634-35. Incidentally, this is the earliest inscriptional reference to the poets Kālidāsa and Bhārāvī.



GP-16. *Ground-plan of Meguti temple*

'Meguti is a corruption of "meguti" meaning "the upper temple" or "the temple that is above," and has been so named on account of its elevated position upon the hill.' (Cousens, *Chālukyan Architecture*, p. 31).

General description

The Meguti temple stands on a high moulded plinth, facing the north (GP-16). It is entered by a flight of steps that leads to the pillared *mukhamaṇḍapa*, and here this is well developed. It is larger in size than seen anywhere else at Aihole, 19′ 3″ in length, and is supported by sixteen pillars, plain and

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unadorned, square in section, with three-sided plain capitals. On the plinth below and on the parapet wall of the *mukhamaṇḍapa* are carved friezes. *Kudūs* adorn the moulding between the plinth and the parapet wall. The antechamber is entered through the space between the two back pillars of the pillared portico, and is divided into two compartments by an intervening wall. A flight of steps leads to a small inside antechamber that is 15′ 8″ in width and 9′ 2″ in depth. This is supported by four pilasters. A door 3′ 2″ in width leads to the circumambulatory passage. The shrine is set inside a large hall, 28′ 8″ in breadth and 28′ 5″ in length. A number of cross-walls and pilasters divide the *pradakṣiṇā* passage into small chambers. Actually, in its present condition, it does not fulfil the function of a circumambulatory passage. On the back has been built a cross wall closing the passage completely.

Shrine

This wall is obviously a later addition. The shrine is 10′ 10½″ in breadth and 11′ 6″ in depth, with four pilasters at the four corners. Close to the back wall, on a rectangular slab, is the image of a Tirthankara, crudely carved. A fine example of Chālukya art is the huge sculptured slab of the Jaina Yakshī Siddhaikā seated in the *vāma-lalitāsana*, with attendant female deities on either side. She can be recognized by her lion mount seen carved below. This is a beautiful specimen of the skill of the Chālukya sculptor and reveals his perfect knowledge of female anatomy as exemplified by the fine figure of the Yakshī. Siddhaikā, being the attendant Yakshī of Mahāvīra, is sculpted in all the Jaina caves of Ellora. She is also portrayed in the Jain temples of North Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Mukha-mandapa

The pillared *mukhamaṇḍapa* has a stone staircase leading to the roof above, where, just above the main shrine of the ground floor, is another shrine. This contains a Jaina image. From this eminence of the Meguti one can look down upon the picturesque village of Aihole, dotted with the beautiful temples of the Western Chālukyas, spread over an area of about three square miles.

The *śikhara* over the upper shrine is now in ruins. It is long and rectangular in shape and reveals a plain and smooth workmanship. The art of dressing stones had now been perfected. The exterior walls of the temple are plain. The monotony of the plain surface is, however, relieved by the *devakosthas* made in them for receiving images of Jaina deities. These are made up of pilasters with three sided capitals. The cornice above shows *Chaitya*-arches. The mouldings of the roof also show friezes, while the moulding of the temple has *Chaitya*-arches with human heads inside. Below, inside tiny *devakosthas*, are carved deities.

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Plan

The plan of the temple (GP-16), with a highly developed pillared porch (*mukhamaṇḍapa*), the *antarāla* divided into two parts, the shrine surrounded by a *pradakṣiṇā patha* is indicative of its late construction. The inscribed slab on the eastern wall of the *antarāla* gives its date as *Saka* 556, i.e., A.D. 634-635. Meguti represents the culmination of the temple movement at Aihole, as its ground-plan suggests.

TEMPLE MOVEMENT AT AIHOLE

This movement started with the Konti-gudī group in the early 6th century A.D. It would be difficult to date this group earlier than this. Aihole was probably the first capital of the Chālukyas, when they were still feudatories. Some early records of the Chālukyas mention Jayasiṁha and his son Raṇarāga. They are said to have flourished in the Bādāmi region in the first half of the 6th century A.D., but little is known of their reigns. The fanciful account given in the Kauthem Grant need not be taken seriously. This means that the first king of this dynasty was Pulakeśin I, the son of Raṇarāga, who really laid the foundations of Chālukya power. He ruled from A.D. 535 to 566 and is credited with the conquest of Bādāmi. He is identified with the Chālukya Vallabheshvara, mentioned in an inscription inscribed on the fort of Bādāmi. Pulakeśin I was succeeded by his sons Kīrtivarman and Maṅgaleśa. The former ruled from A.D. 566-67 to 597-8. He was a great conqueror and secured victory over the Nalas, the Mauryas and the Kadambas. His brother Maṅgaleśa had a short reign of thirteen years (A.D. 597-610) and was killed in the struggle with his nephew Pulakeśin II, the son of Kīrtivarman who ruled from A.D. 609-10 to 642.

Evolutionary stages

The entire temple movement at Aihole was confined to the reign-periods of four kings of the Chālukyas, viz., Pulakeśin I (A.D. 553-567), Kīrtivarman (A.D. 567-597), Maṅgaleśa (A.D. 597-609) and Pulakeśin II (A.D. 609-642). The movement culminated with the temple of Meguti built in the time of Pulakeśin II, which forms an important source of information of the great exploits of that king, thanks to the Aihole Praśasti inscribed on it. It is possible to credit Jayasiṁha and Raṇarāga with the building of the temples of the Konti-gudī group, for these are definitely earlier than the Lad Khan temple.

In the evolution of the Chālukya architectural style, the following clearly marked stages may be noted:

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1. The veranda-shaped temple with the transverse plan and with the cella built in the back wall.
2. The temple with a pillared portico, a main hall with pillar support, and with the cella in the back wall.
3. The temple with a pillared portico, a main hall supported by pillars, and with the cella detached from the main hall.
4. The temple with or without a portico, but with a main hall, the cella in it and with a circumambulatory passage.
5. The temple with a pillared portico, a main hall, an antechamber and cella, with or without a circumambulatory passage.

Konti-gudi group

It was probably in this order that the temple architecture of the Chālukyas evolved at Aihole. The Konti-gudī group has a veranda-like structure with the *garbhagṛiha* set in the back corridor, but not as yet enclosed by a wall. The temple opposite to this is joined to it by a pillared portico. It has a squarish plan; however, it is still a veranda-like structure. The shrine is set in the back wall. In the third temple of this group, the veranda opening is enclosed by huge latticed walls in the front. This is obviously a later temple. All these temples can be assigned to the beginning of the 6th century A.D.

Lad Khan

The Lad Khan temple marks an advance over the Konti-gudī group. It has a regular pillared porch and a *sabhāmaṇḍapa* with a shrine built in it. One of its facade pillars show the Chālukya crest—the boar with the conch, wheel and lamp—engraved on the western face of the right entrance pillar of the pillared portico. The *Varāha-lāñchhana* could not have been legitimately adopted by anyone before Pulakeśin I. Both Jayasiṁha and Raṇarāga were feudatories. The temple of Lad Khan may, therefore, be assigned to about A.D.540 as suggested by Dr. Balsubramanyan (*Lalit Kala*, No. 10, Oct. 1961, pp. 41-44).

Tarabasappa

A further advance in the Chālukya architectural movement was signified by the construction of the temples of Tārabasappā, the main temple of the Galagnath group, the Nārāyaṇ temple, and the temple adjoining Huchchimalli-gudī. This advance was marked by detaching the cella from the main hall. The temples of this group have pillared porticos and main halls with detached cellas. These temples would, therefore, date to round about the middle of the 6th century A.D. This was the period of the reign of Pulakeśin I, the first great king of the Chālukya dynasty. It is not surprising, therefore, that these temples should have been built during his eventful reign. It may be remembered that Pula-

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keśin I was a very devout Hindu. He had performed the Aśvamedha and many other sacrifices. It was natural, therefore, that the temple movement at Aihole should gather momentum during his reign.

Appearance of pradaksina

In none of the examples cited so far has the *pradakṣiṇā* passage made its appearance. It first appears in Gaudar-gudī, the Durgā temple, the Ambiger-gudī, the Chakra-gudī (Pl. 46) and a few other temples. It is obvious that now the rituals connected with Hindu worship were gradually being evolved. These made a procession path necessary. It was not that the idea of one was new for the Buddhist stupas of Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda had procession paths. It meant, however, that Hindu ritual had not yet considered the procession path as essential to worship. This idea gradually developed in the latter half of the sixth century A.D. Even then, its necessity was not universally accepted. Even in later examples, the procession path would sometimes be omitted. The temples of this period probably belong to the period after A.D. 560. An important point to start with is the dated Bādāmi Cave III inscription of Mangaleśa (A.D. 597-609), who succeeded his brother Kīrtivarman (A.D. 567-597) to the throne. This was obviously a period of great artistic and religious activity, when the Chālukyas were engaged in adorning their cities with temples.

The antarala

The final stage in the evolution of the Chālukya temple movement was reached when it developed another important feature—the *antarāla* or antechamber. In most of the rock-cut architecture of the fifth century A.D., this feature was present. At Ajanta, Cave No. 16, which was excavated by Varāhadeva, the Minister of the Vākaṭaka King Harisena (A.D. 475-500), has an *antarāla* preceding the shrine. In the Rāvaṇa-phadi cave also, which is excavated in a small hillock, an *antarāla* has been provided. This cave has a verandah-porch, an *antarāla* and a cella. At Aihole, the beginning was made in the Huchchimalli-gudī. Here for the first time, an *antarāla* is provided for. Its early construction is signified by its place in the hall itself. The Huchchimalli-gudī is a large rectangular hall that accommodates the *sabhāmaṇḍapa*, the *antarāla*, the *garbhagṛiha* and the *pradakṣiṇā*. The temple in the Galagnath group with the *antarāla* marks an advance over Huchchimalli-gudī, as its *antarāla* is separate from the *sabhāmaṇḍapa*. The sanctuary cannot now be directly entered from the *sabhāmaṇḍapa*. It is protected by an antechamber to the shrine. The last stage in the movement at Aihole was reached in the reign of Pulakeśin II, when the temple of Meguti was built on the imposing heights of the Meguti hill. This temple, built by the Jainas,

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has a beautiful pillared portico in which is enclosed an *antarāla* divided into two parts, and a shrine surrounded by a processional path that was later converted into small rooms by building pilasters and cross-walls.

End of first phase of temple movement

The first phase of the Chālukya temple movement significantly ends with the second Pulakeśin. The Chālukya dynasty reached great heights during the time of this powerful king. The art movement that was conducted with great vigour and enthusiasm from the beginning of the 6th century A.D. at Aihole, and then at Bādāmi, received a setback in the years A.D. 609-10, when the Chālukya dominions were rocked by the civil war between Mangaleśa and his nephew Pulakeśin II. When the latter succeeded to the throne, there was complete anarchy and confusion in the Chālukya dominions. To put it in the words of the Jaina poet Ravikirti who composed the Meguti Inscription at Aihole, 'the whole world was enveloped in the darkness that was the enemies.'

Meguti

The Jain temple of Meguti was completed in about A.D. 634-35. It is obvious that for some years after A.D. 609, the temple activity at Aihole must have come to a stop. Many of the temples of Aihole show half and full circles on pillar-faces, on entablatures and cross-beams left incomplete, signifying a period of political disturbance and general instability. Temple-building could be undertaken only after the enemies—both internal and external—had been defeated or won over. Meguti symbolized that triumph ; however, this triumph was to prove expensive as far as Pulakeśin II was concerned. He had attacked the Pallava country and defeated the Pallava king Mahendravarman. This humiliating defeat was avenged by his son Narasiṁhavarman I in A.D. 642, when he attacked and reduced Vātāpī and killed Pulakeśin II. This defeat crippled the Chālukyas for years. For thirteen years (A.D. 642-655) the Pallavas remained in Vātāpī and the surrounding regions. It was only after thirteen long years that Vikrayāmaditya I (A.D. 655-81) succeeded in establishing a Chālukya hegemony in Vātāpī and the surrounding regions. In many of the viceregal records, Vikramāditya I is described as Paramamāheśvara (i.e., a devout worshipper of Śiva). This is rather interesting. From now on, the temple activity of the Chālukyas shifts from Aihole to Paṭṭadkal. Here, close to Aihole, the later Chālukyas built magnificent temples, dedicated not to Vishṇu as at Aihole, but to Śiva. This may be one reason why they transferred their activities from Aihole to nearby Paṭṭadkal. This may also have been the time when the Vaishṇava shrines of Aihole were converted to Śaiva worship.

Pattadkal

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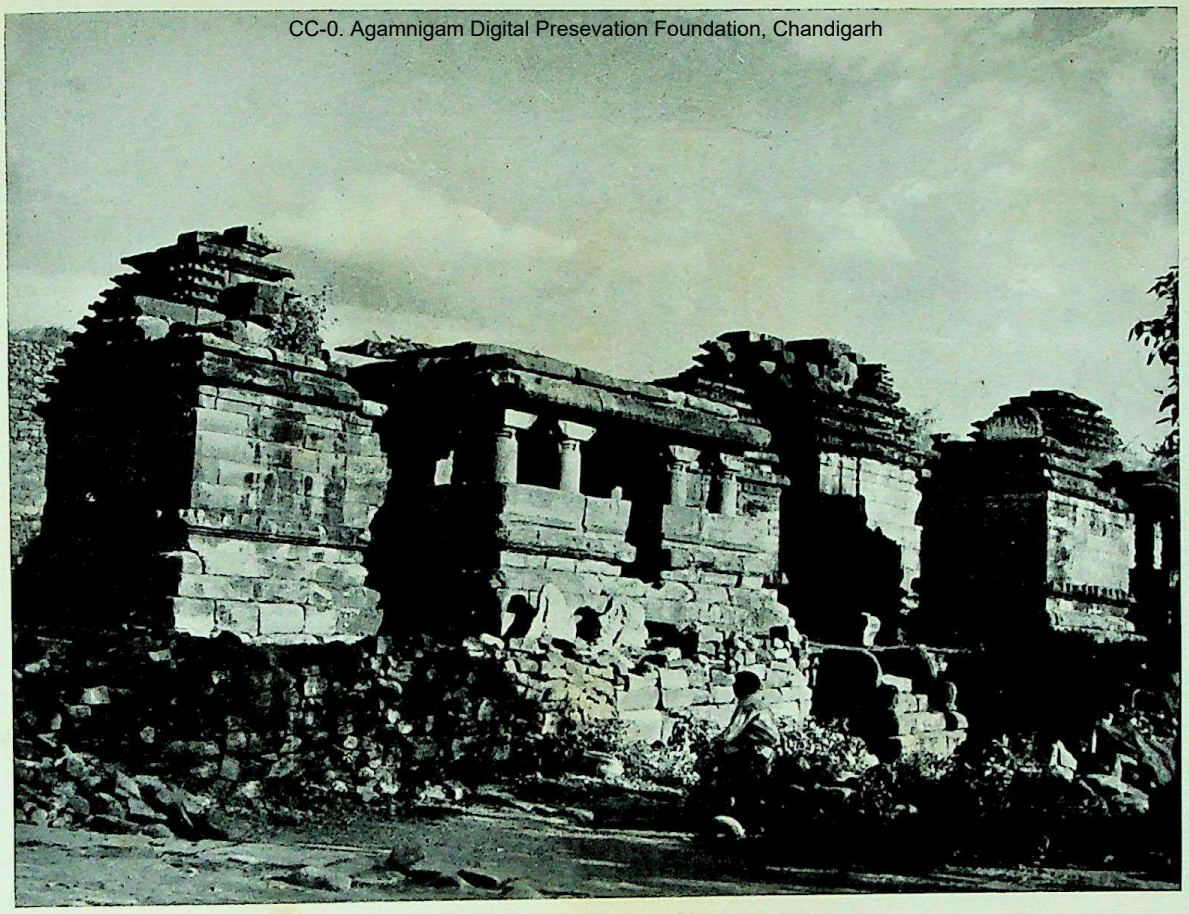

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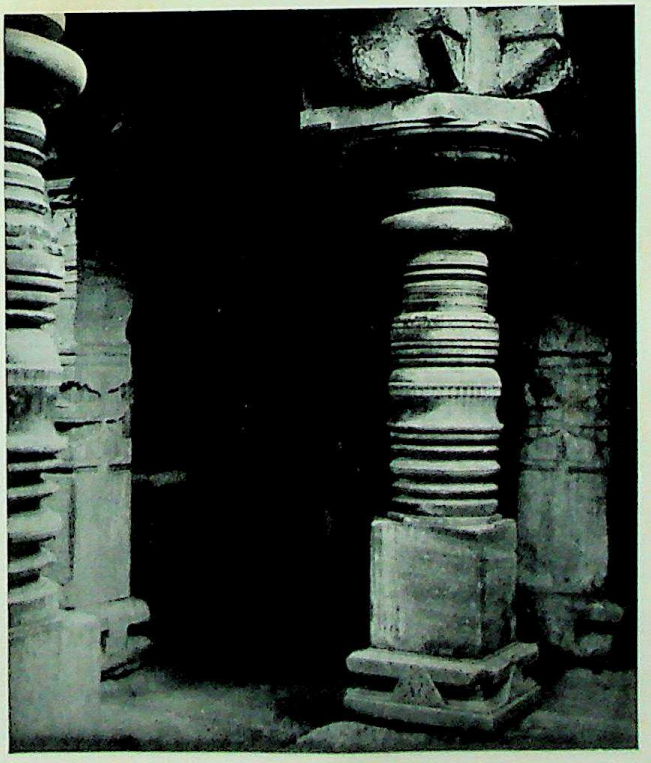
54. Maddin gudī. Pillars in the hall.
55. Desayār temple, Trimbakésvara group. General view.



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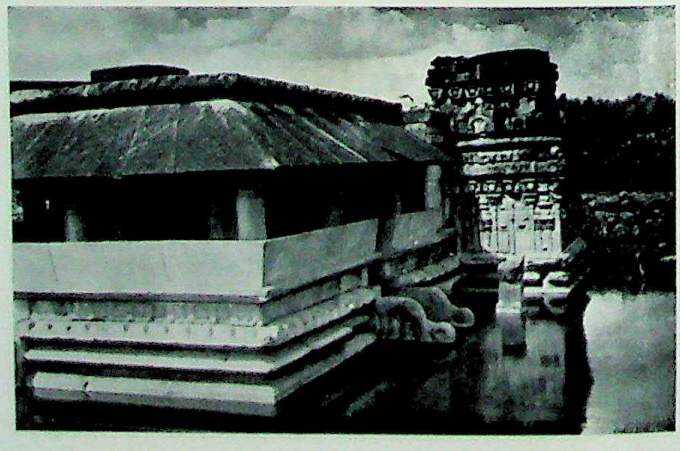
56. Rāchī-gudi. General view.
57. Rāchī-gudi. Close-up view.



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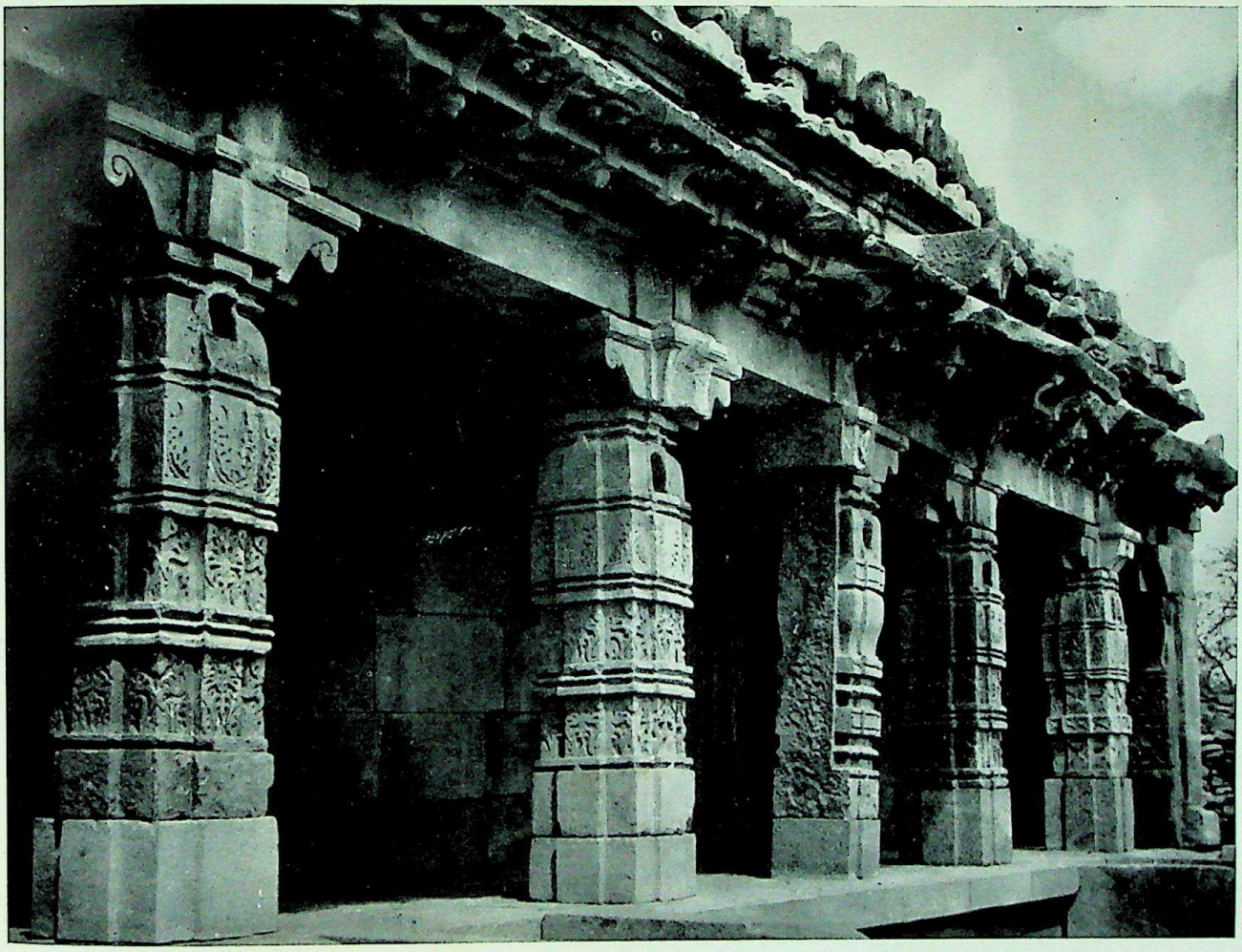

58. Charanti Matha (Jain temple No. 2). Details of pillars in the front.

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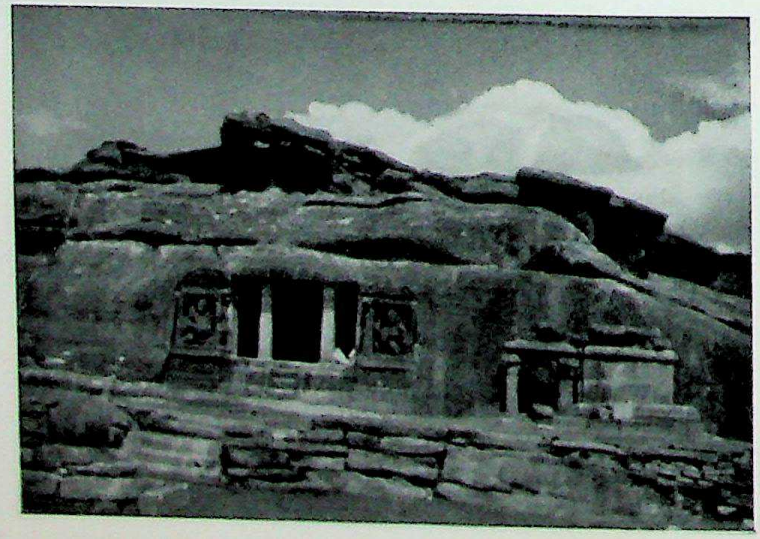
59. Rāvaṇa-phadi cave temple. General view.
60. Rāvaṇa-phadi cave temple. Close-up view.



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61. Konti-gudī. Sculpture of Brahma.
62. Konti-gudī. Sculpture of Siva.
63. Konti-gudī. Figure of Nārāyana.

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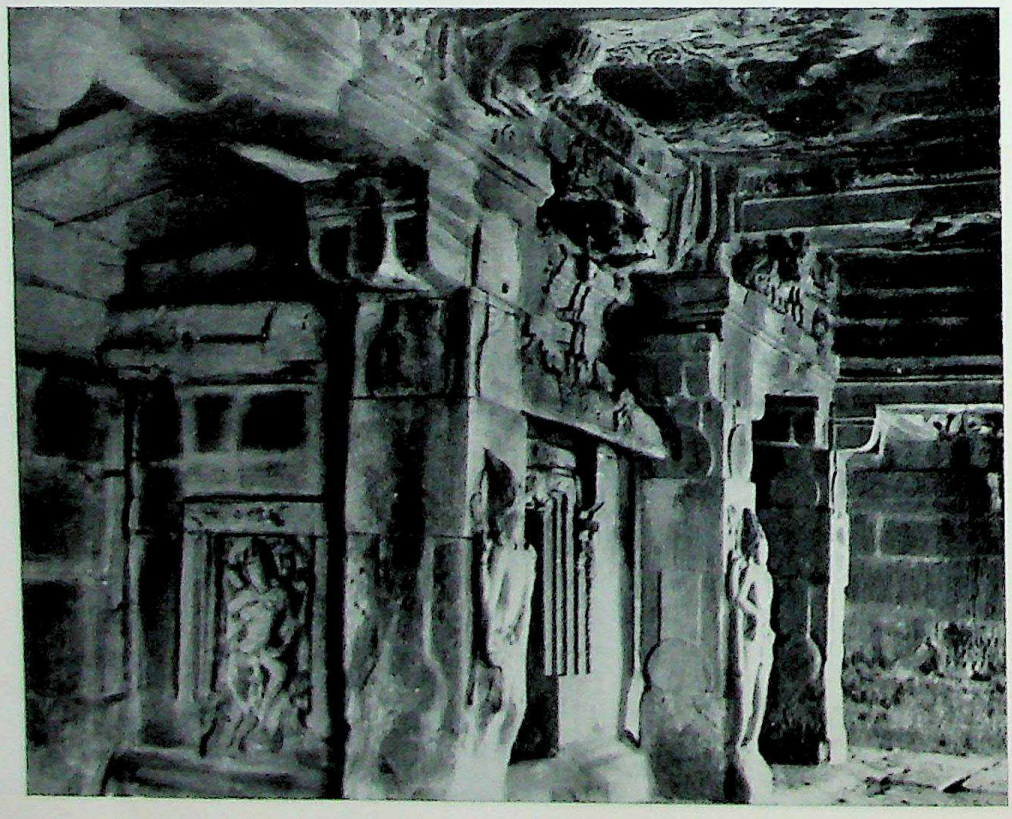

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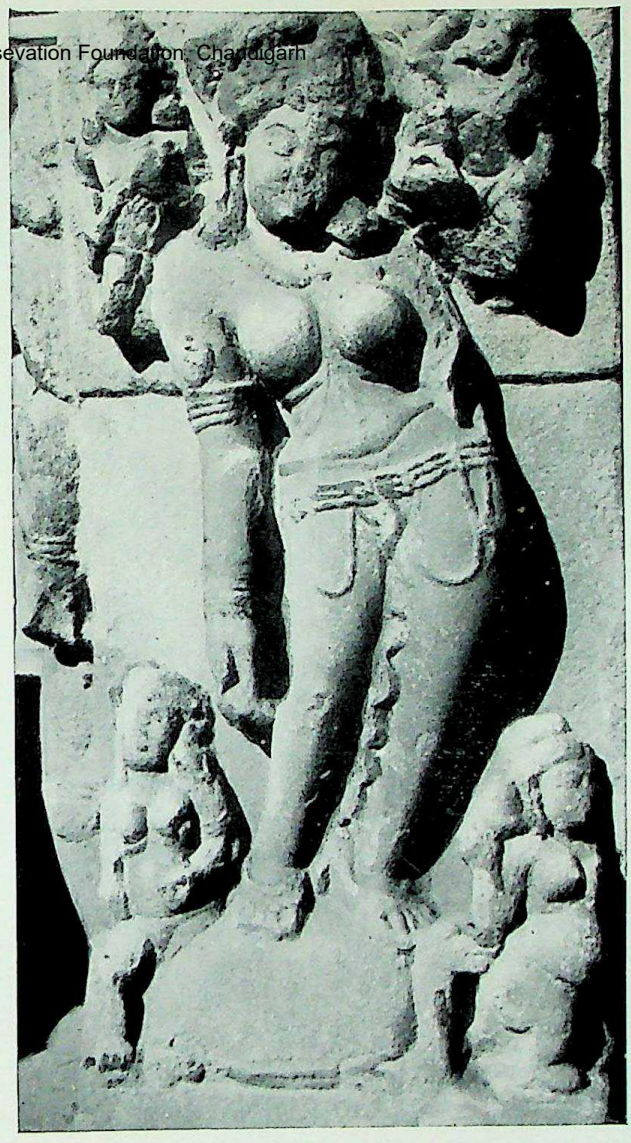
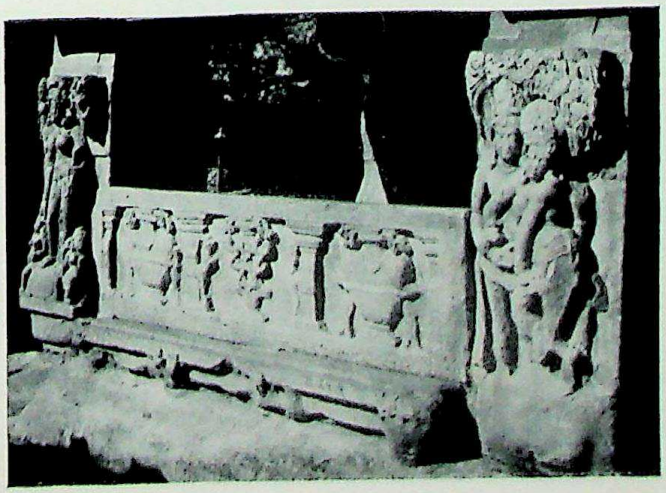


66 68

64. Konti-gudī. Interior view, facing east.
65. Konti-gudī. Interior view.
66. Lad Khan temple. Couple on a pillar.
67. Lad Khan temple. Details of the front porch.
68. Lad Khan temple. Yamunā on a pillar.



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69. Lad Khan temple. Couple on a pillar.

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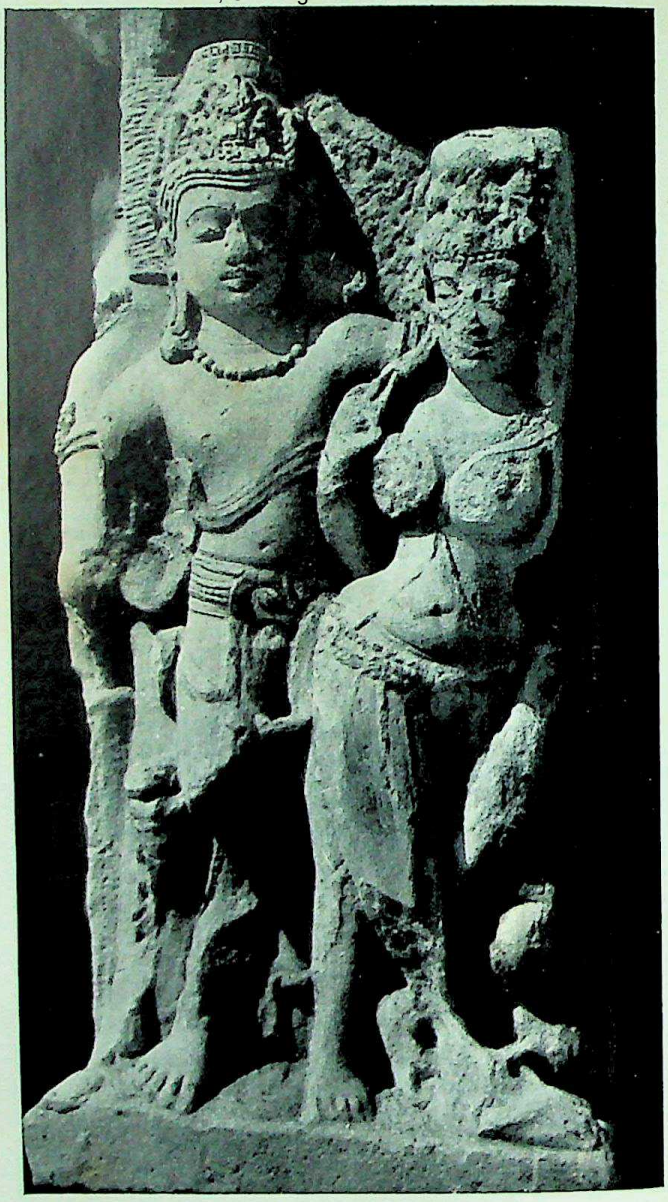

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70. Lad Khan temple. Couple on another pillar.

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TEMPLE ORIGINS AND RELATIONSHIPS

A study of the Chālukya temples would be incomplete without considering the problem of their origin and relationships. Writing in 1926, Henry Cousens sought to trace their origins to the Dravidian or Pallava temples of the South (See his *Chalukyan Architecture*, p. 17). To put it in his own words, 'the Chālukyan architecture is but an outgrowth of the earlier Dravidian style, so modified in its development by Western temple builders as to have eventually attained a separate style in their hands.' In this connection, it would be interesting to quote another scholar who writes, 'Anterior to the 7th century A.D. Indian builders and sculptors appear to have been engaged exclusively in erecting monuments for the Buddhist and Jainas. If any Hindu temples were erected before this period they must have been built of wood or some other perishable material, because no trace of such buildings has hitherto been discovered. With the beginning of the seventh century we enter a period of Pallava history for which the records are more numerous and the chronology is not altogether a field of conjecture and doubt. The earliest stone monuments of Southern India belong to this period. **7th century**
(In fact, the history of Hindu architecture in Southern India may be said to begin with the reign of the Pallava king Mahendravarman I) (A.D. 610-640)' (A. H. Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, Part I, 1924, p. 3). 'No Pallava monument has been found anterior to the 7th century A.D.) in the Tamil country) (Ibid., p. 4) (Then again, it must also be noted that the monuments built by Mahendravarman were all rock-cut temples and Mamalla carried forward this tradition. It was only in the Rajasiṁha period (A.D. 674-800) that the Pallavas began the construction of structural temples. To quote Longhurst again, 'The structural monuments of the later period were started by Rajasiṁha at the beginning of the eighth century and thus belong to the style of Rajasiṁha') (Ibid., p. 8). Writing about the Hindu temple, Stella Kramrisch says, 'One of these schools had its centre in Dravidadesa—South India proper from Madras to Seringapattam and Cape-Comorin. There the temples called Dravida came to be built such as are preserved from the 7th century and in the subsequent centuries when the texts referred to were completed. Not, however, only in the Dravida country itself but also in the Kanarese part of the Deccan, where Aihole, Mahākūṭeśvara, Bādāmi and Paṭṭaḍkal, are situated were such temples built at an earlier date even' (*The Hindu Temple*, Vol. I, 1946, p. 288).

Though several copper-plate inscriptions make mention of gifts made by the early Pallava kings to temples (See M. Rama Rao, *Early*

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Chālukya Architecture, pp. 437-38 or *Journal of Indian History*, Silver Jubilee Number, 1963), the temples themselves are not extant. The inscriptions refer to gifts made to temples, but give us no idea of the form of the early temple architecture. Any theory, therefore, that seeks to trace the origins of the Chālukya temples of the sixth century A.D. at Aihole to the Pallavas, is bound to prove untenable. The latter began to construct structural temples only in the 8th century A.D. The earliest temples of Aihole were constructed some 250 years before. The ground-plans of the temples of the Konti-gudī group would prove that the Chālukyas owed nothing to the Pallavas. A study of all the temples would lead to the same conclusion. In this connection, it is important to remember that the movement of building structural temples started much earlier in the Deccan and the Andhra country than in the Tamil country. One of the earliest extant structural temples built in the Deccan is the brick temple of Ter in the Osmanabad District of Maharashtra State. Another of the same period is the one at Chezarla, situated in the Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh. These temples may legitimately be assigned to a period between A.D. 350 and 450. The process of building free-style *Chaityas* started in the first century A.D. 'The free-standing Chaityas were built at a very early period and the foundations of such an apsidal building of the 1st century A.D. have been found in Sirkap (Taxila)' (*Indian Archaeology*, A Review, 1962-63). Twenty miles away from Aihole is the Chikka-Mahākūṭa temple, built on the apsidal plan, a precursor of the Durgā temple at Aihole. Ter, situated in the Maharashtra part of the Deccan and Chezarla in Andhra Pradesh, are closely related to the Chikka-Mahākūṭa temple built in the Chālukya country in about the 5th century A.D. Chikka-Mahākūṭa is 7 Kms. in the south-east direction as the crow flies from Bādāmi, and 3½ Kms. from Mahākūṭa. The only difference is that here in the Chālukya country, stone has been used instead of brick as in the earlier examples at Ter and Chezarla. The temple of Chikka-Mahākūṭa is thus the first stone temple built on the apsidal plan, and is complete with the *pradakṣiṇā patha* (See R. S. Gupte, 'An Apsidal Temple at Chikka-Mahākūṭa—Dist. Bijapur,' *MUJ* Vol. IV, No. 2, February 1964, pp. 58-63). In the circumstances, Cousens' theory of the Pallava origins of Chālukya temple architecture must be considered untenable.

Temples at Ter and Chezarla

There is no justification, then, for tracing the origin of Chālukya temple architecture to the Tamil country. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that the Pallavas borrowed a number of motifs from the Chālukyas. The question, therefore, of the 'builders from the south' coming to Aihole, bringing with them architectural motifs from the south does

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not arise. For a period of a century and a half this temple movement of the Chālukyas at Aihole continued with great vigour and at this time temple architecture was in the process of evolution. Works on the *Vāstuśāstra* were just being written. No definite tradition had yet evolved. The experiments which were being made at Aihole must have greatly influenced these early *Vāstuśāstra* texts. It must be remembered that it was for the first time that a new material, a greenish or bluish-black stone, more tractable under the chisel, was being brought into use. This was eminently suited for fine carving. The custom of dressing stone by cutting it to size, and piling stone upon stone, was a new one. This technique had been tried at Chikka-Māhākūṭa in the middle of the fifth century A.D. The Gupta temple at Deogarh, which is assigned to the early sixth century A.D. (See Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture, Buddhist and Hindu*, 1959, p. 50.) and is a brick construction, could obviously have not served as a model. Neither could the early temples of Sāñchī (No. 17) or the temple of Tigāwā in the Jabalpur District of Madhya Pradesh, both datable to the early fifth century A.D. (Ibid., p. 48), have served as models for Chikka-Māhākūṭa. The Sāñchī temple and the Tigāwā temple have a pillared portico, opening into a square shrine. The Chikka-Māhākūṭa temple near Bādāmi has an apsidal plan, with an open porch, a rectangular *Chaitya*-like hall, and an apsidal-sided shrine with a procession path of a similar shape. Obviously, the two are not related. The Durgā temple at Aihole, assignable to the middle of the sixth century A.D., is in imitation of Chikka-Māhākūṭa, twenty miles away, and not of any Pallava model in the south or a Gupta model in the north.

Vastusastra texts

Use of stone

The theory of the Gupta origins of all art-forms anywhere in India showing any excellence and artistic merit must be discarded. All that was good did not originate with the Guptas. The art of Ajanta is Vākaṭaka. The magnificent rock-cut monuments of Ellora owe nothing to the Guptas ; most of them were excavated in the period of the early Western Chālukyas, who built the structural temples of Aihole, Bādāmi and Paṭṭaḍkal. The rock-cut shines of Elephanta, near Bombay, also belong to the period of the Chālukyas. It is obvious, therefore, that the Chālukyas did not have to borrow either architectural motifs or architects and sculptors from the north or the south. Their art was indigenous. If the Chālukyas could excavate the magnificent temples of Ellora as early as the sixth century A.D., it is obvious that they did not require to borrow anything from the Pallavas or the Guptas. The rock-cut *rathas* of Mamallapuram belong to the period of Mamalla, A.D. 640-674 (See

Gupta origins refuted

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Mamallapuram

Longhurst, op. cit., p. 8). They are thus later than the Meguti temple, with which the temple movement at Aihole ends. The *rathas* of Mamallapuram are not anterior to the Chālukya caves of Ellora or the temples of Aihole. It seems, therefore, that it was this art movement at Aihole and Bādāmi that influenced the art-forms of the Tamil country. It also leads one to the conclusion that this temple movement had no relation to and owed nothing to the examples at Tigāwā, Sāñchī, Deogarh or Bhitargaon. The Chālukya movement was an independent and indigenous movement, encouraged by the great dynasty of the Chālukyas.

NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN INFLUENCES

The effort to trace a northern or southern influence leads sometimes to conclusions that cannot be substantiated. For instance, some of the temples of Aihole are said to be of the Nāgara style and some as Dravida. The characteristics of the Nāgara style are, 1) a square *garbhagṛiha* with a curvilinear *śikhara* crowned by an *āmalaka-śila*, 2) graduated buttress-like projections in the middle of the exterior walls of the *garbhagṛiha*, 3) a cruciform plan and, finally, 4) projections on the side walls of the *garbhagṛiha* carried up to the *vimana*.

Nagara style

Temple plans

The temples of the Konti-gudī group, the Lad Khan, the Tārabasappā, the Nārāyaṇ or the Huchchimalli temples do not fit this description. The temples of the Konti-gudī group are veranda-like structures with rectangular *garbhagṛihas*. They do not have a cruciform plan. One of the temples of this group has a shrine on the top of the main shrine below, but no *śikhara*, either curvilinear or pyramidal. The walls of the *garbhagṛiha* in all these temples are severely plain and have no projections of any kind. Some of these temples, however, have curvilinear *śikharas* with *āmalaka-śilas*. Huchchimalli, for instance, is a temple with a pillared portico, a *sabhāmaṇḍapa* and *antarāla*, a rectangular shrine with *pradakṣiṇā* and a curvilinear *śikhara*. The Tārabasappā temple also has a pillared portico, a *sabhāmaṇḍapa*, a *garbhagṛiha* detached from the hall, but without a processional path, and a curvilinear *śikhara* with an *āmalaka-śila*. Dr. Rama Rao is correct when he maintains that temples of this kind cannot be ascribed to the Nāgara order. The temple plan of the Chālukyas differs from the Guptas also in another respect. In the Gupta temple there is a porch before the shrine, but the Chālukya temples do not show this arrangement. The Guptas evolved a new type

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of pillar, the *pūrṇakalaśa* as in the Bhitargaon temple. The Chālukyas developed an *āmalaka*-type pillar at Bādāmi and Aihole. The pillars at Aihole are mostly square in section and have moulded two-sided or three-sided capitals.

Dravida style

In the Dravida style, the *pradakṣiṇā* is supposed to be an important feature. The other important characteristic is the *śikhara* of the pyramidal type. The Durgā temple at Aihole has a *pradakṣiṇā* and a curvilinear *śikhara*. The Huchchimalli-gudī also has a *pradakṣiṇā* and a curvilinear *śikhara*. The temple in the Huchchimalli group with a main hall and an *antarāla* has a shrine without the *pradakṣiṇā*, but with the *śikhara* of the stepped pyramid variety. It seems, therefore, that when the temples of Aihole were being built these styles had not yet definitely crystallised. The Chālukya *Sthāpaka* was evolving a form of temple that would satisfy the needs of an evolving Hindu ritual. Any effort, therefore, to try to fix it into styles developed in a later period is bound to fail.

Gupta and Aihole temples

It is also open to question whether the Gupta temples of Tigāwā, Sāñchī, etc., could have influenced the Chālukya temple construction at Aihole. The relationship seems rather far-fetched. In the first place, the only Gupta temples assignable to a period earlier than the Konti-gudī group and the Lad Khan are the temples of Sāñchī and Tigāwā. We have seen, however, that these have nothing in common with the Aihole temples. Deogarh is contemporaneous with some of the temples of Aihole but these again have little in common. Even before Sāñchī and Tigāwā, the Chālukya temple movement had started at Chikka-Mahā-kūṭa near Bādāmi. This movement then shifted to Aihole, gathering momentum under Chālukyan patronage. Here it played with a variety of forms in the course of its evolution. This architectural movement was far more integrated than that of the Guptas. The Chālukya priest-architect was not required to cross the Vindhyas and go to the North for his models. His models were right there, on the banks of the river Malaprabhā in the Chālukya dominions, within the confines of their earliest capital. The Gupta movement was scattered over time and space. Tigāwā and Sāñchī are separated by 150 miles. The temple at Eran is north-east of Bhilsa; Nachna-Kuthra is in Ajaigarh State, Deogarh is in the Jhansi District, and Bhitargaon is in the Kanpur District.

Gupta influence

Such Gupta influence as exists may be confined to (1) the river god-desses Gaṅgā and Yamunā carved on the two sides of the entrance door-

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way of the shrine door, (2) the carving of Saṅkha and Padma *nidhis* on the two sides of the temple as at Ravaṇa-phadi, etc., and (3) the *pūrṇa-kalaśa* as an ornamental motif on the *kaksāṣanas* of the temples. But this is not to say that the Chālukya art-movement had Gupta origins or was Gupta-inspired. The Guptas could not have inspired anything much outside their dominions. Their political influence remained confined to the *prāchi* or eastern country and to the Madhya-deśa. It had certainly not spread much further beyond the Vindhyas. Then, again, the Guptas were already in trouble towards the end of Kumargupta's reign (A.D. 455). Skandagupta was the last great king of the dynasty and had to face the Huna invasion twice, once as a crown-prince and then again as king. He died in A.D. 467 and the imperial period of the Guptas ended with his death. Thus by the end of the fifth century A.D. the Gupta Empire disintegrated. To contend that the Guptas continued to dominate all art movements that followed in the wake of their disintegration, is to show an unjustified bias in favour of them. The Chālukya art of Aihole, then, represents an indigenous movement that had its roots largely planted in the native soil. Its inspiration was local and the forms it evolved were worked out by the genius of the local architects and sculptors. Later it would be influenced by other art-forms, as at Paṭṭaḍkal. But this was after it came into contact with another southern dynasty, the Pallavas, at a later date.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHALUKYA TEMPLES

Orientation

At this stage, certain other characteristics of the Chālukya temples of Aihole may be noted. Most of these temples run east to west, facing the east in the majority of cases. But some face the north. At Aihole, for instance, two temples of the Konti-gudī group face east, and one faces the west. The Meguti faces the north. Most Vaishṇava temples face east or west and some north. It is easy to know whether a temple is dedicated to Vishṇu or Śiva as the vehicle or the cognizance of the deity to whom the temple is dedicated is carved on the dedicatory block, on the lintel of the shrine door. In the Vaishṇava caves, these may be Śri or Lakshmī, Vishṇu on Garuḍa or Garuḍa alone. In Śaiva caves, Śiva in some form or other is carved on the lintel of the shrine, or a figure of Gaṇeśa. At Aihole a man-Garuḍa holding *Nāga*-tails is invariably carved on the dedicatory block of the shrine entrance. In later temples of the 9th and 10th centuries, the man-Garuḍa is replaced by Gajalakshmī.

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Doorways

Another important feature is the carving on the doorways. Like the doorways of Gupta temples, those at Aihole are extremely decorative. The vertical bands of frieze-work are very delicately chiselled. Pilasters with decorative motifs and mouldings are seen on either side of the shrine door. There are small figure-sculptures, floral motifs, etc., on vertical bands of the doorway. *Chaitya*-arches are a very popular motif, these being used as a running motif on cross-beams, architraves, and entablatures. Above the lintels are carved tiny *śikharas* of the curvilinear and stepped pyramid variety, with *Chaitya*-arches inside.

Pillars

The pillars are mostly square in section, but they are sometimes profusely carved, as in the portico of the Durgā temple and at other sites. At many places, circles and half-circles are made for frieze-work. The pillars give the impression of having been left incomplete. Only the outlines of a medallion may sometimes be seen. The work was probably interrupted by disturbed political conditions.

Gateways

Sometimes ornamental gateways were erected to serve as general entrances to groups of temples. One such gateway is seen at the approach to the Galagnath group of temples (Pl. 47). It consists of two free-standing upright pillars supporting a beam on the top, with the sculptures of Gajalakshmī and Gaṇeśa on it. On two sides of the architrave are seen *makaras* with garlands issuing from their mouths, and forming arches. In the two side arches can be seen tiny figures of *Yālis*. In the two central arches are Gajalakshmī and Gaṇeśa. The upright pillars are square in section with square bases. The shaft above shows the vase-and-foliage design at intervals. It also has bands of scroll-work. The shaft narrows near the neck which is moulded. Inside the arches are figures. Above is the abacus, topped by a two-sided capital supporting the beam above.

Another ornamental gateway is carved near the Veṇīyāvar group of temples (Pl. 48). Here the pillars that support the architrave above are different. They have a square base, but are round in section, and the abacus is replaced by a round flat slab. The capital is two-sided and moulded. Two *makaras* on the two sides form a *makara-toraṇa*. In the three central arches are carved the figures of Brahmā, Śiva and Vishṇu. Such ornamental gateways to courtyards around temples became common in a later period.

Temple dimensions

Considering the fact that the material used for temple building was new, the dimensions of the temples are impressive. Nārāyaṇ-gudī

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is 26′ 2″ broad and 40′ long, an area of nearly 1,000 sq. feet. The main temple of the Galagnath group is 23′ 7″ by 47′, i.e., about a thousand square feet. The Durgā Temple is 40′ 9″ by 84′ 8″, i.e., nearly 3,200 sq. ft. The Meguti is 37′ 3″ by 86′ 3″. The Huchappayyā Matha is 25′ 2″ by 45′ 6″. For stone masonry, these could be considered as large temples, especially when it is remembered that no cementing mortar has been used for binding the stones together. To build a solid structure by piling stone upon stone in this manner is not easy. The way out was found by evolving the technique of first dressing the stones to predetermined sizes, and then making grooves and offsets in them of the required size, so that they could fit into one another. Pillars and walls would naturally play an important role in structures of this kind. The arrangement of the pillars would be made according to requirements as decided by the priest-architect. The *Sthāpaka* would have to work out the exact load of the roof. The thickness of the walls and of the pillars and the depth of the foundation would thus depend upon the load they would have to bear. All this was carefully worked out. Obviously, this required adequate knowledge of engineering. Once the weight of the roof or the *śikhara* had been measured, the thickness of the walls and the number of pillars and their thickness as well as the depth of the foundation could be calculated. Once this was done, no additional work would be carried out that would increase the weight of the roof, because such additional weight would upset the calculations of the architect and the building might collapse. For this reason, it is difficult to accept the contention that the *śikharas*, built over the *garbhagṛihas*, were later additions. These must obviously have been originally conceived along with the temple. In this initial stage of stone construction, it is inconceivable that the walls could take so much extra load without additional pillar or other support. While studying the temples of Aihole, it must, therefore, be kept in mind that the *śikharas* must be contemporaneous with the temples and not later additions. This will help in a better understanding of this architectural movement.

Construction

JYOTIRLINGA GROUP OF TEMPLES

There are a large number of temples at Aihole—nearly a hundred. Of these, only the important ones have been noticed so far. The others may be mentioned in passing. The biggest is the Jyotirlinga group (Pl. 49) containing sixteen temples, located about a furlong from Ravaṇa-Phadi in the southern direction. Most of these temples are in a ruined condition.

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Main temple

The main temple of the Jyotirliṅga group stands on a high plinth, facing the east, and has a highly developed *mukhamaṇḍapa*, supported by eight pillars. The latter are square in section and have two-sided capitals. Two middle pillars in both the rows are placed close to each other. In between these four pillars is a huge *Nandī*, seated facing the *liṅga* shrine. The portico is 12′ in breadth and 20′ 3″ in depth and has a flat roof. The temple is entered through a flight of four steps on the south.

The door-frame of the main hall is plain. The *sabhāmaṇḍapa* is divided by two rows of pillars into a central nave and two side aisles. The hall is 17′ 9″ in breadth and 18′ 8″ in depth. The pillars of the hall are square in section and have two-sided capitals. The roof of the main hall is flat. The entrance door of the shrine is plain. The dedicatory block is blank. In the main hall are a number of loose sculptures. One is that of Gaṇeśa ; another is of a stylised lion. In the left aisle is a Matṛika slab. Beginning from the left, the first is Brahmī. The second may be Māheśvarī. The third and the fourth cannot be identified. The fifth is Vārāhi. The sixth is probably Indrāṇī. The seventh looks like Chāmuṇḍā. Gaṇeśa and Virabhadra are absent.

Temple No. 2

Another important temple of this group stands facing the north. Like the temple described above, it has a well developed portico. As a matter of fact, it is one of the most highly developed at Aihole. The most striking feature of the *mukhamaṇḍapa* are the *kakṣāsanas* built over a squat plinth on all the four sides, and slanting outside. The *āsanas* have lotus motifs, *ghata-pallava* designs, deities, etc., carved upon them. The portico is supported by sixteen pillars. Twelve of these are built inside the *kakṣāsanas*. They all have a square base, a rounded member that becomes eight-sided at the top and then turns inward to form a moulded neck. The capitals are either two- or three-sided. There are four more pillars, placed on a slightly upraised platform. They have a base with mouldings and recesses, developing into a squarish section further up. The shaft above is eight-sided with three bands in the middle. Above this there is a box-like design. Then the pillars become rounded to support a circular member with sharp edges. On this is the huge abacus which supports the three-sided capital. The roof of the main hall is flat. The portico can be entered from the north, east or the west. It is 16′ by 16′, and opens into an antechamber that is 6′ 11″ in depth and 8′ 7″ in breadth. The dedicatory block of the shrine has a sculpture of Gajalakshmī. On two sides of the door-frame are decorative pilasters. The roof of the antechamber is now destroyed. The shrine is square

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in shape, 6′ 10″ by 6′ 10″, with a *liṅga* inside. Unfortunately, all the walls of the shrine along with the roof have been destroyed.

Temple No. 3 Another temple of this group stands facing the east. The portico is now destroyed. The main hall is entered by a flight of two steps, newly made. The entrance door, which is very decorative, also seems to be a later addition. On the lintel is a beautiful sculpture of Gajalakshmī flanked by the usual elephants on the sides. The roof of the hall is supported by four central pillars, two pillars of the antechamber and two pilasters of the entrance door. It is supported further by eight pilasters on the sides, which are now destroyed. The four central pillars, which are very decorative, are placed on an elevated platform. The first pillar on the left has a Kanarese inscription of seven lines. The pillars have mouldings and recesses at the base. Further up, the latter takes a squarish shape. The shaft above is fluted and has three horizontal flat bands in the middle. Above this the shaft again becomes squarish, only to develop a *kalaśa*-like member, which in turn supports the big circular member with sharp edges. Above this is the huge abacus supporting the three-sided capital. The hall is 15′ 8″ in breadth and 14′ 10″ in depth. The depth of the antechamber is 7′. The shrine entrance has two partially carved pilasters on the sides. On the lintel is a figure of Gajalakshmī. The shrine is a square, 6′ by 6′, and has a *śikhara* of the stepped pyramid variety but this is now partly broken.

MALLIKARJUNA GROUP OF TEMPLES

There are five temples in the Mallikārjuna group. The main temple faces the east. There are three more temples on its north and north-east facing east and the fifth facing the north.

Main temple The main temple, which stands facing the east, has a portico, a main hall, and a shrine (Pl. 50), but the antechamber and the circumambulatory passage are absent. The porch is entered through a flight of four steps and is supported by four pillars; these are square in section and have beaded festoons issuing out of *makara-mukhas*. In some of the lotus medallions on the pillars, human figures have been carved.

The door of the main hall is very decorative. On two sides of the door-jambs have been carved amorous couples and *Nāgas* standing in an attitude of adoration. On two sides of the door are pilasters support-

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ing an overhanging canopy, on which *Chaitya*-arches have been carved. On the lintel is a man-Garuḍa and above this canopy, in the centre, is the figure of Gaṇeśa. On the two sides are stylised lions. The breadth of the portico is 7′ 2″ and its depth 9′ 4″. The main hall is divided into a central nave and two side aisles by two rows of pillars and pilasters. The pillars are four in number, square in section, and have beaded festoons issuing out of *makara-mukhas*. In the medallions above are carved dancing figures, gods like Narasiṁha, Śiva and Padma Nidhi, *mithuna* figures, lotuses, etc. The capitals are two-sided and moulded. On the entablatures miniature temples have been carved. In the central nave is a seated figure of Nandī facing the shrine.

Main hall

On the shrine door below can be seen Gaṅgā standing on a *makara* on the right and Yamunā standing on a tortoise on the left. *Nāga* males are also seen standing in an attitude of adoration. On the lintel is a man-Garuḍa holding *Nāga* tails in his two hands. The shrine is 7′ both in breadth and in depth.

The roof of the central nave of the main hall is flat, while that of the side aisles is slanting. The *śikhara* shows both curvilinear and pyramidal tendencies and has a *kalaśa* on top, but with the finial missing. A similar *śikhara* is seen in the main temple of the Galagnath group.

Matrika slab

Outside the Mallikārjuna temple, on the open ground, is a Matṛika slab. Some of the Matṛikas here are four-handed. They are all shown seated on high pedestals, and from left to right are: 1) *Brāhmī*. She can be easily recognised by her three heads. Two of her four hands are placed on her two laps. But the objects in these are now destroyed. The objects held in the other two hands are also destroyed. 2) *Māheśvarī*. She is also four-handed. In one right hand she holds a *triśula*. In one left hand she holds an *aṅkuśa*. The other two hands are destroyed below the elbows. Her legs are also destroyed. 3) *Kaumarī*. She holds a *daṇḍa* in one right hand. The object in the other hand is destroyed. She is two-handed. 4) *Vaishṇavī*. She is four-handed. In one right hand she holds a Wheel, in one left hand a Conch. Two hands are on the two laps. 5) *Vārāhī*. She is two-handed. She holds some weapon in the right hand. She can be recognised by her boar face. 6) *Aiṇḍrī*. She is two-handed. The objects in her two hands are destroyed. 7) *Chāmuṇḍā*. She can be recognised by her ugly face. Virabhadra and Gaṇeśa are absent.

Kare-gudi

Kāre-gudī greatly resembles temple No. 2 in the Jyotirliṅga group in plan. It stands at the edge of the tank at Aihole, on a very high plinth,

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a flight of seven steps leading to the portico. The porch is supported by sixteen pillars and on all four sides it is enclosed by *kakṣāsanas*. The four central pillars of the portico are on a slightly elevated platform, but all the pillars are similar in design to those in temple No. 2 in the Jyotirliṅga group. The porch is 12′ 7″ in breadth and 13′ 2″ in depth, and has an *antarāla* and a *garbhagṛiha*. The antechamber is 6′ 6″ in breadth and 4′ 7″ in depth. The lintel of the shrine door has a sculpture of Gajalakshmī. On both sides of the shrine, which is 5′ 6″ in breadth and 6′ 6″ in depth, are carved figures of Śiva acting as *dvārapāla*. The *śikhara* of the shrine is of the stepped pyramid variety.

Bille-gudi This temple is close to the Kāre-gudī, on its left (Pl. 51). The porch of the temple has disappeared. The main hall is supported by four pilasters of the side walls. It has an antechamber and a shrine. The entrance door of the antechamber and of the shrine are both squat. There is no sculpture on the lintel of the shrine door. The pillars of the hall are similar to those of the Kāre temple and Jyotirliṅga temple No. 2. There is no *śikhara* over the shrine.

VENIYAVAR GROUP OF TEMPLES

Main temple Another important group is the Veṇiyāvar group of ten temples. The main temple of this group stands with its entrance facing the south (Pl. 52). Architecturally, the positioning of the main hall and the shrine is in the east-west direction. The *ardhamaṇḍapa*, which leads to the main hall, is supported by two pillars and two pilasters. The pillars have a square base, then an octagonal member, then an inverted *kalaśa*-kind form, above which is a square band and an inverted *kalaśa* form and the four-sided capital. Opposite to this porch is a *stambha* in a very damaged condition.

The entrance door to the main hall has a sculpture of Gajalakshmī on the lintel. Sculptures are also found on the door-jambs. On the two sides are pilasters. The roof of the main hall is supported by four central pillars set in a square and ten pilasters on the four sides. The central pillars are all similar. The moulded base is square in section. The upper part is squarish. Above is an octagonal member topped by a sixteen-sided member. Further above, the pillar becomes more or less round and has a circular band which narrows towards the neck. On this is an *āmalaka*-type member supporting the four-sided capital.

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The hall is 13′ in breadth and 6′ 5″ in depth. The shrine door is decorative with geometric patterns carved on the door-jambs. A number of tiny sculptures are seen on the door-frame, with pilasters carved on the two sides. On the lintel is a sculpture of Gajalakshmī flanked by two elephants, and on the ceiling is a lotus. The shrine is 7′ in breadth and 8′ 2″ in depth and inside is a *liṅga*.

The moulded plinth of the temple is 2′ 6″ in height. On the exterior of the temple walls are carved miniature temples separated by pilasters. The *śikhara* of the shrine is of the stepped pyramid variety.

Temple No. 2

Another important temple in this group stands facing the east. It has a portico, an antechamber and a shrine (Pl. 53). The porch is supported by four central pillars all of one type. The base is square in section and its lower part has mouldings. The shaft above also has a number of circular mouldings and narrows towards the neck. Above is the usual circular member with pointed edges. Above this is the huge square abacus supporting the four-sided capital. The sloping roof of the porch is supported by eight pillars and two pilasters. These have square bases, round shafts and two-sided capitals. The porch is 15′ 9″ in breadth and 15′ 11″ in depth. The shrine door is decorative. On the lintel is a figure of Gajalakshmī. The shrine is 7′ 3″ in breadth and in depth. There is no *liṅga* or *yonī* inside. The *śikhara* of the shrine is now in ruins but from what remains it seems to have been of the stepped pyramid variety.

MADDIN GROUP OF TEMPLES

Maddin-gudi

This group is situated in the heart of the village, and consists of four temples. The main temple, known locally as Maddin-gudī, stands facing the north. Its general plan shows a *mukhamaṇḍapa, a sabhā-maṇḍapa* opening into the *antarālas* of two subsidiary shrines on the east and the west, an *antarāla* and the main shrine. Only one pillar of the portico is now intact. The latter was originally supported by two pillars and two pilasters. The extant pillar has a square base, a recess, a square slab and then an octagonal member. The pillar then becomes roundish and has another octagonal member with floral motifs carved on it. Then it again becomes roundish and supports an octagonal member above and a square slab. Again it becomes squarish, has another recess, then a

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thin square slab and a half-*kalaśa*. Above the moulded neck is the usual circular member with the edges blunted by a thin band. On top of this is a thin abacus on which rests the three-sided capital.

On the lintel of the entrance door is the figure of Gajalakshmī flanked by two elephants. The door-jamb is floral. On the two sides of the door-frame are the usual pilasters.

Main hall

The main hall is supported by four central pillars which are placed on a slightly upraised platform. These pillars are obviously not made of local stone. The stone slabs used for these pillars have evidently come from the Dharwar region. It is the green trap-rock of Dharwar, of the polished variety (Pl. 54). The pillars have a moulded square base. The shaft consists of a series of intricate mouldings right up to the neck. Above is a roundish *āmalaka*-type member. On top of this is the big square abacus supporting the four-sided capital. The main hall is 16′ 6″ in breadth and 16′ 4″ in depth, with a free standing sculptural slab in it showing Śiva dancing, holding a *damaru* in the right hand and a *triśula* in the left. Close by is a stylised lion. The main hall has two stone grilles in the northern wall. The *Nandī* has been placed in the *antarāla*. The antechamber is 6′ in breadth and 4′ 9″ in depth. The entrance door of the shrine is decorative and on the lintel is Gajalakshmī flanked by two elephants. The shrine is 5′ 10″ in breadth and 6′ 10″ in depth and inside is a *liṅga*.

Subsidiary shrines

Subsidiary shrine on the east. The *antarāla* of the shrine is 5′ in breadth and 6′ in depth. The shrine door is decorative. On the lintel is a crude sculpture of Gajalakshmī, as usual flanked by two elephants. The shrine is 6′ square. There is no *liṅga* inside.

Subsidiary shrine on the west. The antechamber of the shrine is 6′ 1″ in breadth and 4′ 11″ in depth. The shrine entrance is decorative. On the lintel is Gajalakshmī flanked by two elephants. The shrine itself is 6′ 1″ square.

The *śikharas* over all the three shrines are of the stepped pyramid variety.

TRIAMBAKESVARA GROUP OF TEMPLES

There are five temples in this group (Pl. 55) situated in the heart of the village. The main temple of this group stands on a very high plinth,

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facing the south. It has a portico, a main hall, a shrine and two subsidiary shrines on the east and the west. The portico is supported by two pillars and two pilasters. The former are decorative, mainly square in section. The lintel of the hall entrance has a figure of Gajalakshmī. The entrance door is decorative. The main hall is supported by four central pillars arranged in a square and twelve pilasters set in the side walls. The central pillars are of one type. The base, which is square in section, is moulded. The shaft above is roundish and has a series of mouldings. Below the neck is the usual circular member with sharp edges. Above is the abacus supporting the four-sided capital. The main hall is 15′ 6″ by 15′ 6″, and has two tiny windows. The antechamber is 6′ 2″ in breadth and 4′ 6″ in depth. The lintel of the shrine-door has a sculpture of Gajalakshmī. The door itself is decorative. *A Nandī* has been placed inside the shrine, which is 7′ 6″ in breadth and 5′ in depth.

Main temple

The dedicatory blocks of the two subsidiary shrines also have sculptures of Gajalakshmī. There is nothing inside the shrines.

The *śikharas* over all the three shrines are of the stepped pyramid variety.

Desayar temple

The Desayār temple is situated in a field owned by a Desai—that is why it is known by this name—just a furlong to the west of the village. The temple stands facing the east. At the entrance door is the figure of Gajalakshmī flanked by the usual two elephants. The ground-plan consists of a main hall, an antechamber and a shrine. The main hall is supported by four central pillars and these are similar in design to those in the Rāchī-gudī, Kāre-gudī and temple No. 2 of the Jyotirliṅga group. They are placed over an elaborately built and slightly raised platform. The main hall is in the shape of a square. The entrance door of the antechamber has a figure of Lakshmī carved on it, shown seated holding a lotus in the right hand. The antechamber and the shrine are in the shape of a square. Inside is a *liṅga*. There is a *Nandī* lying in front of the main entrance. The *śikhara* over the shrine is of the *bhūmi*-type.

Rachi-gudi

Another important temple here is the Rāchī-gudī (Pls. 56, 57). It has a portico, a central hall opening into the main shrine, and two subsidiary shrines on the east and the west. The *mukhamaṇḍapa* is very similar to that of temple No. 2 of the Jyotirliṅga group and the Kāre-gudī. It has a moulded plinth about 40″ in height. The portico is supported by four central pillars placed on a slightly raised platform. On

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this platform, at the centre, is placed a *Nandī*, seated facing the shrine. The portico has high *āsanas* on its three sides—the southern, eastern and western. On the outside, these *kakṣāsanas*, which slant outwards, have floral designs carved upon them. There is a sloping roof on the three sides, namely, the southern, the eastern and the western. Ingress to the portico is through three entrances on the south, the east and the west.

Pillars

The pillars of the portico have a square base, which is moulded below. The shaft above is first octagonal and then has rounded mouldings. Above, it takes an inverted *kalaśa*-form, with rounded mouldings on top. The shaft narrows towards the neck and exhibits more rounded mouldings. Above this is the usual circular member with the sharp edges stretching out, topped by a big abacus and the four-sided capital.

The pillars of the *kaksāsanas* are squat. There are eight of these pillars that support the beams of the portico. There are eight more pillars, smaller in size, that also support the sloping roof. The pillars inside the *kaksāsanas* have a base that is square in section. Above, the shaft is first octagonal in shape, and after a recess, again becomes octagonal. Then there is another recess and it becomes octagonal again. Here it shows floral motifs. Above are three more octagonal members, and then an inverted *kalaśa*-like form. Further up are a few more octagonal members. The shaft narrows towards the neck with two more octagonal members above. Above this is the usual circular member, which here takes an octagonal form and supports the three-sided capital. The pillars that support the sloping roof have a base that is square in section. The shaft is roundish and has two-sided capitals. The portico is 17′ by 17′ in dimensions.

The entrance door of the hall is very decorative with a beautiful sculpture of Gajalakshmī on the lintel. On the door-jambs are carved floral and geometric designs and on the two sides of the door are the usual pilasters. The main hall has two perforated windows with floral designs on the southern wall.

Main hall and pillars

The main hall is small in dimensions. It is supported by four central pillars, placed on a slightly raised platform. They have a square base that is moulded below. The shaft above is first octagonal, then rounded, with a circular band in the middle. Above is an *āmalaka*-like member. On this is the abacus supporting the two-sided capital. The breadth of the hall is 10′ 4″ and its depth 17′ 7″. On the east and the west, the hall leads to two antechambers of the subsidiary shrines. The entrance to the antechamber of the main shrine has latticed windows on the

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71. Lad Khan temple. Couple on a pillar.
72. Lad Khan temple. Carving on a pillar of front porch.

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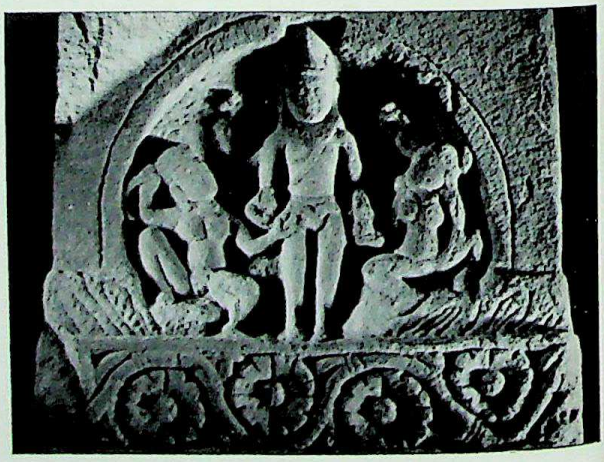
73. Lad Khan temple. Pillar details.
74. Lad Khan temple. Pillar details.



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75. Tārabasappā temple. Loose sculpture of the Saptamātrikas lying inside.

76. Tārabasappā temple. Loose sculpture of Mahishāsurmardini lying inside.

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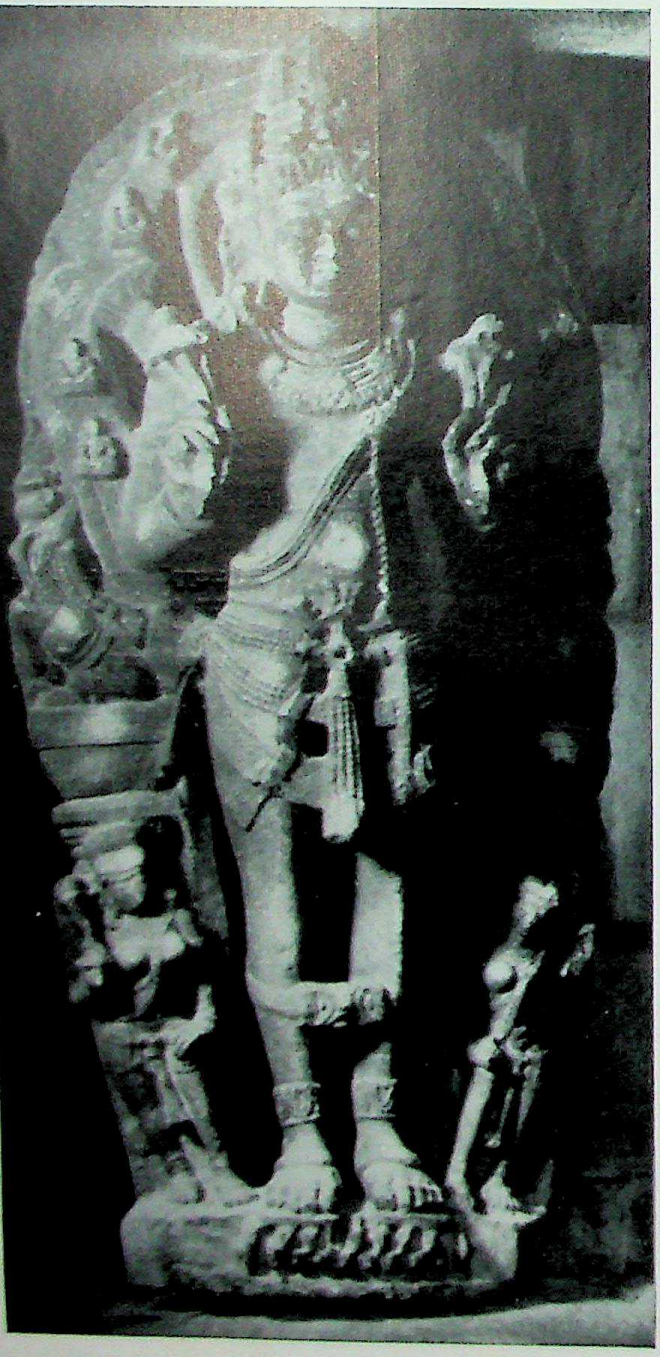
77. Nārāyaṇ temple. Image of Surya in the shrine.
78. Huchchappayyā-gudī. Padma Nidhi on the facade.



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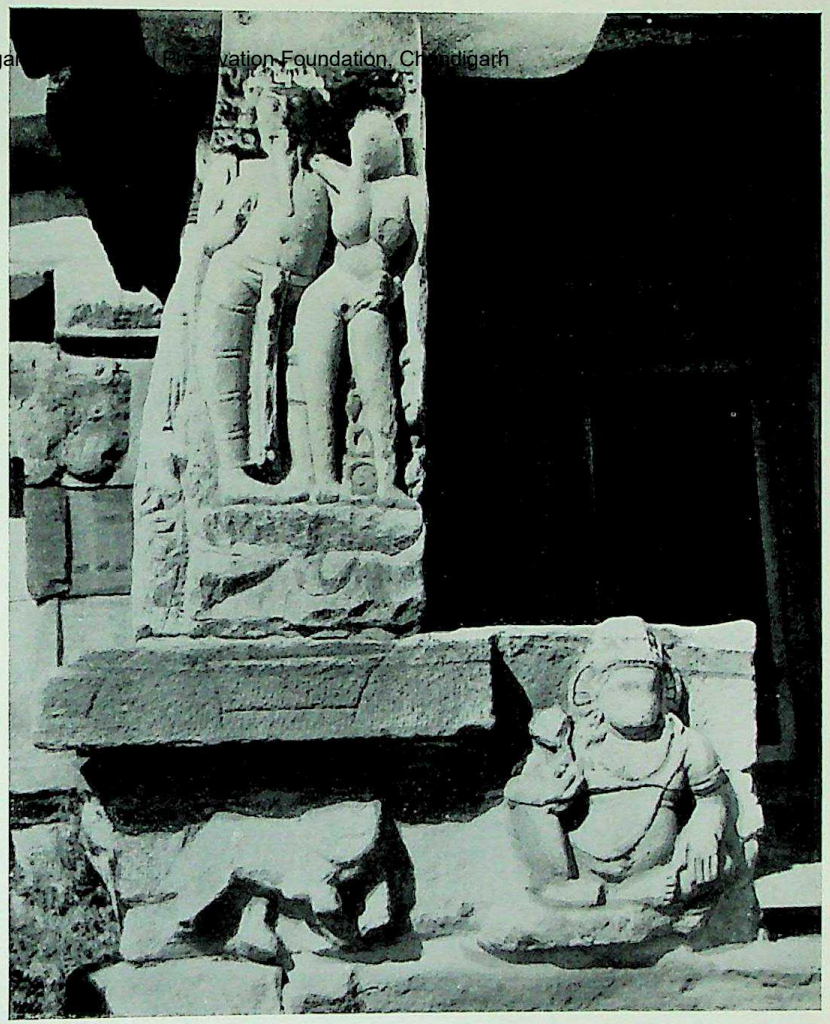

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79. Huchchappayyā-gudī. Sankha Nidhi on the facade.
80. Huchchappayyā-gudī. A couple on a pillar of the entrance.

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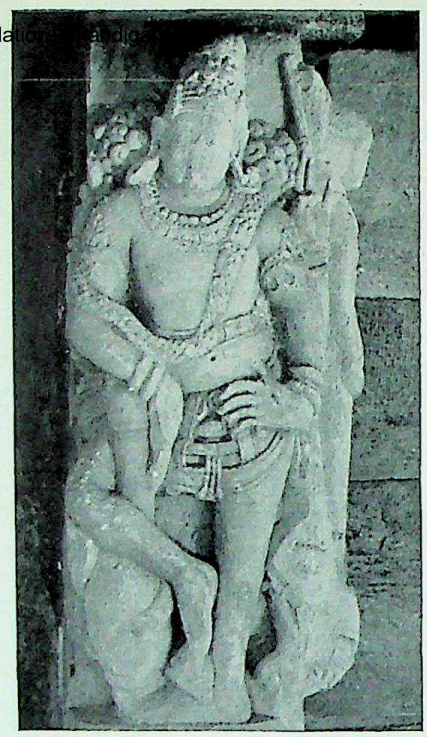
81. Huchchappayyā-gudī. Śiva as Dvārapala at the entrance.
82. Huchchappayyā-gudī. Dancing Śiva on the ceiling of the porch.



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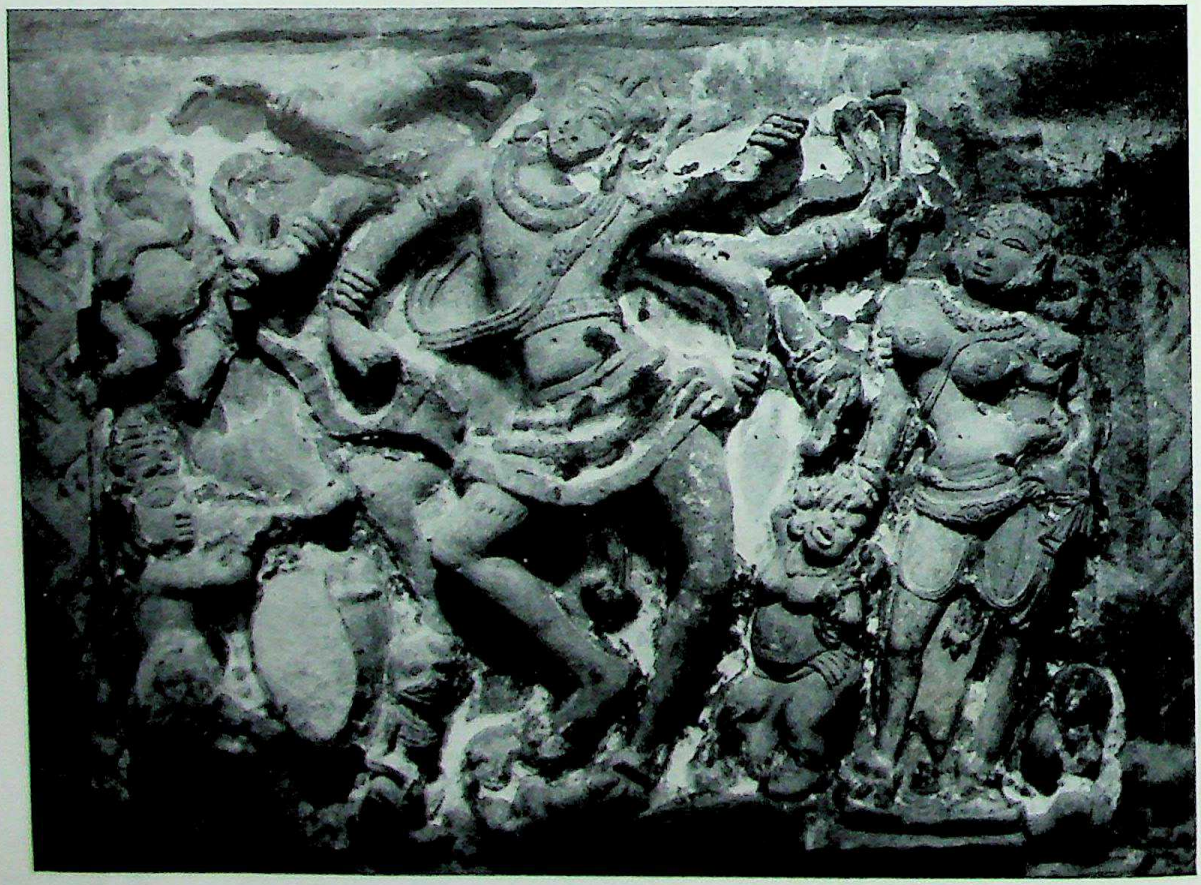

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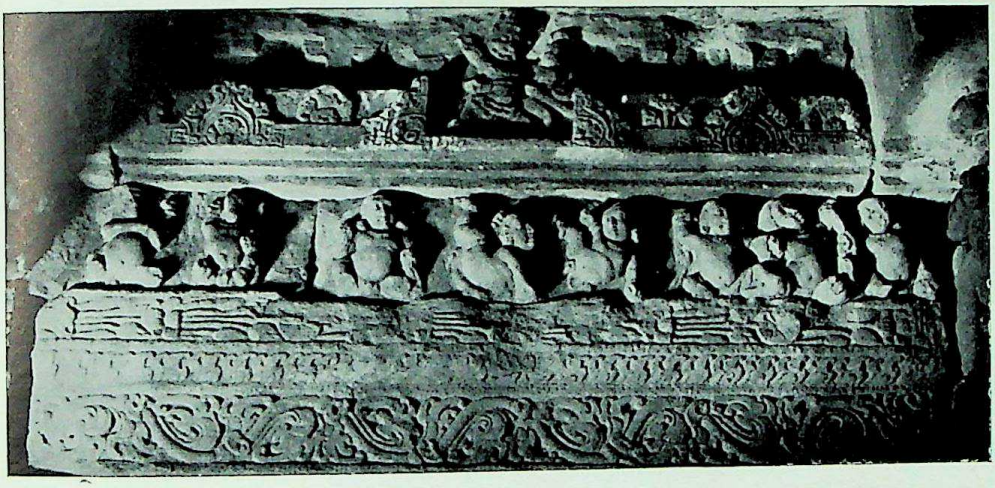

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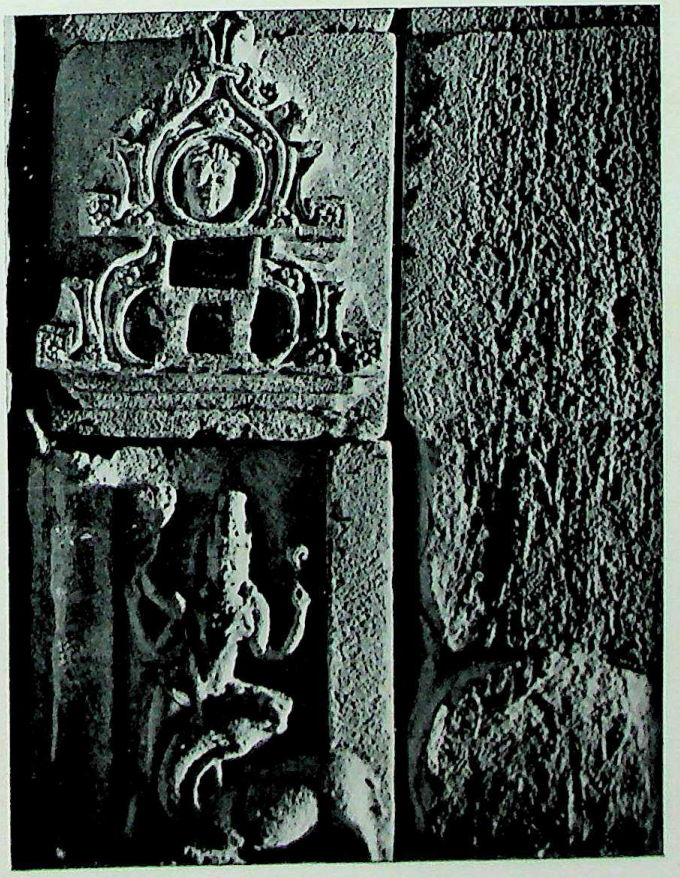

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83. Huchchappayyā-gudī. Nṛisiṁha in interior.
84. Huchchappayyā-gudī. Mahishāsurmardinī in interior.

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85. Huchchappayyā-gudi. Dvārapala near the shrine.

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Shrines

two sides. The door of the *antarāla* is very squat, being only 4′ 2″. The antechamber is 6′ 1″ in breadth and 4′ 4″ in depth. There is no sculpture on the dedicatory block of the entrance door to the shrine but inside the shrine is a *liṅga*. Small openings have been made in the eastern and western walls of the shrine, which is 6′ 6″ in depth and 6′ 3″ in breadth. A lotus has been carved on the ceiling of the shrine. The main shrine has a crude *śikhara* of the stepped pyramid variety. The northern subsidiary shrine also has a *śikhara* of the same type. The exterior walls of the shrines have carved miniature temples and niches separated by pilasters.

CHARANTHI MATHA (JAIN GROUP OF TEMPLES)

Main temple

The main temple of this group faces the north. It has a portico, a main hall, an *antarāla* and a shrine and two subsidiary shrines on the east and the west. The portico is supported by two pillars and two pilasters. The former have a square base, a rounded shaft, the usual circular member and the two-sided capital. The porch is 7′ 2″ in breadth and 16′ in depth. The entrance to the main hall has a sculpture of Mahāvīra with two *Yaksha* attendants on the dedicatory block. The two side pilasters of the door have *ghata-pallava* motifs carved upon them. Huge flat stone slabs cover the roof of the portico.

The main hall is supported by four central pillars placed on a small upraised platform and by twelve pilasters set inside the side walls. A stone staircase is in the hall, and this leads to the roof above. The main hall is 17′ in breadth and 16′ in depth. The central pillars are set in a square. They have a moulded base that is square in section. The shaft above shows a few rounded mouldings and then an inverted *kalaśa*-like form. There are more rounded mouldings above and then the usual circular member with the sharp edges. On top is the huge abacus supporting the four-sided capital. The entrance door of the antechamber shows a figure of Mahāvīra seated on the lion-throne, accompanied by two *chaurī*-bearer attendants. The door-jambs present floral designs and a number of interesting tiny sculptures. On the two sides are the usual pilasters. The antechamber is 8′ 5″ in breadth and 8′ in depth. The shrine entrance also has a sculpture of Mahāvīra seated on a lion-throne, accompanied by two attendants. Over his head is a triple-umbrella and he is shown seated in the *padmāsana* in the *dhyāna-mudrā*. The shrine is 7′ in breadth and 4′ 5″ in depth.

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Subsidiary shrines

There is a subsidiary shrine on the eastern side of the temple. It consists of a portico supported by four pillars, an antechamber and a shrine. On the dedicatory block of the antechamber is Mahāvira with two *chaurī*-bearer attendants. The other subsidiary shrine on the west also has a sculpture of Mahāvīra on the dedicatory block of the antechamber. On the shrine entrance, on the lintel, is Mahāvīra, with a triple-umbrella above his head. On his two sides are the *chaurī*-bearer attendants. The *śikhara* over the shrine is of the stepped pyramid variety.

On the exterior walls of the shrine are carved miniature temples which are separated by pilasters.

Temple No. 2

These are actually two temples facing the south (Pl. 58) with a common veranda. The veranda facade is supported by five very ornamental pillars and two pilasters. At the two ends of the veranda are very decorative entrances leading to the *sabhāmaṇḍapas*. Each of this central *maṇḍapa* is supported by four central pillars set in a square. The main hall leads to the shrine. The veranda is 36′ in breadth and 6′ 6″ in depth.

The temple on the left has a sculpture of Mahāvīra carved on the dedicatory block. This figure is placed inside an elaborately carved temple, the roof of which is supported by six *Yālis*. Above the lintel are a number of miniature *śikharas*. Of these, five are of the stepped pyramid variety and four of the curvilinear type. On the top are carved a number of Jina figures flanked by a person holding an *aṅkuśa* in one right hand, a *pāśa* in the other right hand, and another person holding a *pāśa* in the left hand and a *chakra* (?) in the right. The door-jambs have floral motifs and miniature human and animal figures carved upon them. *Yālis* spring from the pilasters which decorate the door-frame.

The main hall is 16′ in breadth and 16′ 6″ in depth. It is supported by four central pillars that are similar to those in the main temple of this group. The shrine door has a figure of Mahāvīra on the dedicatory block, inside a miniature temple. Miniature *śikharas* of the stepped pyramid variety are also carved above the lintel. The door-jambs are very decorative but there is no sculpture in the shrine itself which is 5′ 7″ in breadth and 5′ in depth.

Adjoining temple

The adjoining temple is similar to this. The roof of the temple is flat and is built up in a series of three courses.

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SOME TEMPLES ON THE MEGUTI HILL

One temple, situated on the Meguti hill, has a *mukhamaṇḍapa,* a transverse *antarāla* and a squarish *garbhagṛiha.* The portico is supported by four pillars which are square in section and are topped by four-sided capitals. The entrance door that leads to the *antarāla* is plain. The latter which is 20′ in breadth has surprisingly no pillar support. This has been made possible by the depth of the *antarāla* which is only 7′. The shrine door is also plain. There is an inscription in Kanarese of one line on the door leading to the *antarāla.*

Another temple

This tiny temple on the Meguti hill stands facing the west. It has a pillared porch and a shrine. The former is entered through a flight of four steps and is supported by two pillars and two pilasters, all of which are square in section. The door leading to the shrine shows a *Chaitya*-arch carved on the dedicatory block. Inside the shrine is a *liṅga.* The *śikhara* over the shrine is of the stepped pyramid variety. In front of the porch, on a high pedestal, is a *Nandī* shrine. Its flat roof is supported by four pillars that are square in section and have three-sided capitals.

A Jain cave

Close to this temple is a small Jain cave temple with a tiny hall and a shrine. The shrine door has some beautiful scroll-work. Inside the shrine is a lion-throne. The usual figure of Mahāvira is now missing ; however the triple-umbrella over his head is still intact. On two sides are *chaurī*-bearer attendants.

Meena Basti

This is an interesting Jain cave-temple on the hill of Meguti, facing south-east. Its general plan consists of a transverse veranda, a central hall opening into the main shrine in the back wall, and two side chambers. Its huge transverse veranda measures 30′ in breadth and 6′ 4″ in depth. Its ceiling is supported by four pillars and two pilasters, all of which are square in section, quite plain and with two-sided capitals. The veranda ceiling is beautifully carved with *Swastika* designs, leaf motifs and lotuses. Human figures are also seen issuing from *makara-mukhas.* On the extreme right end is a beautiful sculpture of Gomateśvara, flanked by his sisters Brāhmī and Sundarī. On the extreme left is Pārśvanātha, guarded by his serpent friend Dharaneṇdra.

The pillars of the side chambers and the shrine are similar. The upper part of the base is squarish in section and has lotus medallions and *makaras* carved upon it. The shaft above is fluted. It narrows

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as it ascends. Above it develops an octagonal section and then an inverted *kalaśa*-like form. On this is a square member topped by the two-sided capital.

Main hall The main hall has a huge central lotus, set inside a square, carved on the ceiling. Four more lotuses are carved at the four corners of the ceiling. The latter also has carved *makaras*, mermaids, fish, geese etc. On the floor, in the centre, is a damaged lotus. On the back wall of the hall are two *dvārapālas*, guarding the main shrine. In the left chamber are a number of interesting sculptures, with Mahāvīra in the centre. On the back wall of the shrine, on a lion-throne, is Mahāvīra seated in the *padmāsana* in the *dhyāna-mudrā*.

RAMALINGAM GROUP OF TEMPLES

A few hundred yards away from the Galagnath group are the five temples of the Rāmaliṅgam group, situated on the right bank of the river Malaprabhā. They are entered by a gate on the north side. They may be assigned to the 9th century A.D.

Main temple The main temple of the Rāmaliṅgam group shows a simple plan. It has a central hall opening on the sides into two subsidiary shrines on the south and the north, both with antechambers. The main hall of the temple is supported by four central pillars placed on a slightly raised platform. They are of one type only. The base is square in section. The shaft is first a square, turns octagonal and then becomes rounded to support the three-sided capital. The two pillars of the *kaksāsanas* have a square base, an octagonal shaft and a two-sided capital. In the main shrine is a *liṅga*. In the southern shrine is goddess Ashṭabhujā and in the northern one is a *liṅga*. The *śikhara* is of the stepped pyramid variety.

YOGINARAYANA GROUP OF TEMPLES

The Yoginārāyaṇa group of temples are four in number. Two of these face the north, one faces the east and one the west. These Jain temples are of later date and show Mahāvīra on their dedicatory blocks. The pillars are very decorative. The *śikharas* are of the stepped pyramid variety.

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Mahalakshmi

In most of the later temples described above, Mahālakshmī is carved on the dedicatory block of the hall entrance as also of the shrine entrance, while in early Chālukya temples, it is the man-Garuḍa who is assigned this place. This is indicative of the later construction of the former. These temples were not carved during the time of the early Chālukyas of Bādāmi, but were most probably built in the time of the later Chālukyas of Kalyāṇi and of the Kālāchuris who ruled for a short period in this territory. The presence of Mahālakshmī may be the result of the influence of Basava and his disciple Channabasava. The chief object of their worship was the *liṅga*. The Liṅgāyats wore miniature *liṅgas* encased in small silver boxes round their necks. To them the *Nandī* was also important, since Basava considered himself an incarnation of *Nandī*. During the Kālāchuri period, Śākta and Pāśupata worship became popular in the Kanarese country, as well as that of the feminine deities. The worship of Kollapur-Mahālakshmī had also become very popular in the Karnataka country. 'An ample *praśasti* of Mahālakshmī is mentioned in a record of A.D. 1049, in which she is said to have seventy tirthas consecrated to her. (K. A. N. Sastri, *The Early History of the Deccan*, p. 441.) The *Vaikritika-Rahasya* says: When you worship Mahālakshmī, then worship Mahākāli and Sarasvatī, etc.' It is obvious, therefore, that the worship of Mahālakshmī was associated with Sākta ritual. This would mean that these later temples of Aihole were built in the 12th and 13th centuries.

Mukhamandapa

All these later temples reveal a uniform pattern. The *mukhamaṇḍapa* is uniformly well-developed and most of these porticos are square in shape, with the four central pillars placed on an upraised platform. The designing of the *mukhamaṇḍapas* follows a stereotype principle. Many of these have highly developed *kakṣāsanas* where one can sit comfortably. The roofs above these *āsanas* are always sloping, providing shelter for the portico and the devotees inside. The *mukhamaṇḍapa* usually leads to a *sabhāmaṇḍapa*, then an *antarāla* and a *garbhagṛiha*. The *pradakṣiṇā* is always absent. Most of the spires of this period are of the stepped pyramid variety. These temples are so different from those of the earlier period that they can be easily marked out as belonging to a different period.

RAVANA-PHADI CAVE-TEMPLE

The Brahamanical cave-temple of Rāvaṇa-Phadi (Pls. 59, 60) is situated on a small hillock, close to the new Traveller's Bungalow

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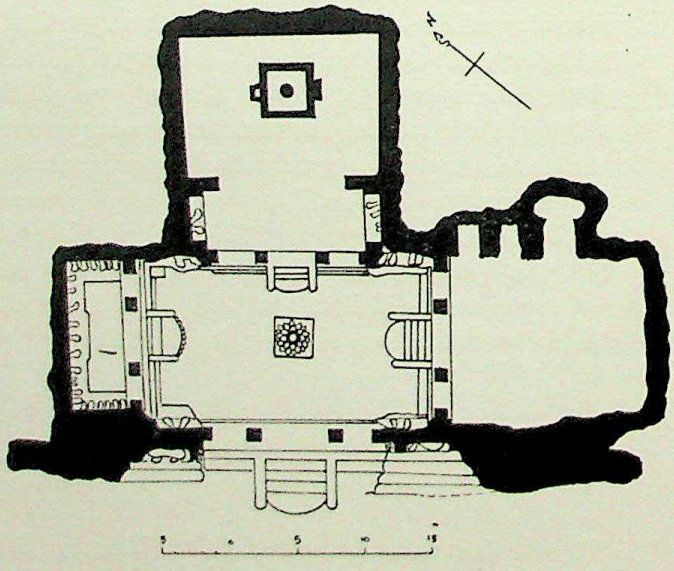
and is a furlong away in the north-east direction from the Durgā Temple. A huge monolithic fluted pillar with a square base is seen in front of the cave. The *āmalaka*-capital has now fallen but it is still lying close by. This is a Śaiva cave with a loose *Nandī* on a high platform outside and a rock-cut *liṅga* inside the shrine. The ground-plan of the temple (GP-17) shows a veranda-type hall, a side chamber, an antechamber of rectangular shape and a rectangular shrine.

Date

The Rāvaṇa-Phadi cave-temple is assignable to the latter half of the seventh century A.D., when after an interval of thirteen years of Pallava rule, the Chālukyas under Vikramāditya I (A.D. 655-681) rallied to win back Bādāmi and the surrounding regions from the Pallava Narasiṁha-varman Mahāmalla. In some viceregal grants, Vikramāditya I is referred to as Parama-Māheśvara. The later Chālukyas became Śaivites and shifted their activity to nearby Paṭṭaḍkal, where they built temples for Śiva. The Śaivite sculptures of Rāvaṇa-Phadi would suggest that it was excavated either in the time of Vikramāditya I or a little later.

Carvings

The veranda which opens into the antechamber has a big lotus carved on its floor right in the centre and it is 17′ 5″ in width and 13′ 5″ in depth. The side chamber is 2′ 8″ in depth and 7′ 11″ in width. In this is carved a Dancing Śiva with his consort Pārvatī and the Matṛikas. In the veranda-like *sabhāmaṇḍapa* are a number of sculptures—Ardhanā-rīśvara on the left of the entrance, Gangādhara-mūrtī on the right, Śiva and Harihara on the right side back wall and Siva on the left side back wall. The antechamber is rectangular. It is 3′ 10″ in depth and 11′ 8″ in breadth. A sculpture of Mahiṣāsura-mardini is carved on the right wall, while the left wall has a sculpture of Varāha. On the antechamber ceiling, in three big



GP-17. Ground-plan of Rāvana-Phadi

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circles, are Vishṇu on Garuḍa, a central lotus and Iṇḍra on Airāvata. The antechamber leads to the rectangular shrine, 13′ 11″ in width and 10′ 8″ in depth, containing a *Liṅga*.

Another rock-cut temple at Aihole is near the Meguti. It is a two-storeyed Jain temple partly rock-cut and partly structural. **Jain temple**

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Part III

THE SCULPTURES OF AIHOLE

Sculpture is the national art of India. It has a continuous tradition beginning with Mohenjodaro in the third millennium B.C. At Aihole, the tradition reaches a new height. Here again, the art of the sculptor is indigenous. This does not mean that it is free of any outside influence. It does show traces of the influence of the Deccan and the south and of the north, but it is basically native. Its inspiration is local. It shows a beautiful blending of the earthly and the spiritual—it soars to great spiritual heights without losing its earthly and sometimes sensuous qualities.

It is important to remember that here at Aihole, the *sthāpaka* has not lost his architectural perspective. The sculptures are not crowded, but are beautifully spaced, as they are beautifully carved. Some of the earliest sculptures are to be seen in the Konti-gudī group.

KONTI-GUDI GROUP

Temple facing east

The temple facing east is the earliest of this group and is joined to the one facing it by a pillared portico. Rectangular in plan, its facade is supported by six pillars, all of which are square in section, squat in height and have three-sided capitals. Divine and human personages adorn them on the front. The north side pilaster, which is attached to the side wall, has a couple carved on it. Though this is greatly damaged, it still retains its grace and dignity. The male has his left hand on the shoulders of his female companion. The woman responds by giving him a loving caress. She has placed her right hand round him and entwines him. Both of them are seen carrying some objects in their other hands, but these have become indistinct with time. Both wear ornate *mukuṭas* and *kuṇḍalas*. Their lower garments have been damaged. Right in the middle is a tree, with its foliage seen above. The front side pillar is adorned with similar amorous couples on its east and north faces. The one on the north side is damaged, but the couple on the east side

Pillars and pilasters

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shows the male holding his consort's right hand in his left. They are both seen standing under a tree. The second pillar from the right has a couple in an extremely damaged condition. The third pillar probably shows Śiva as Tripurānataka. He is eight-handed. *Triśūla, chakra* (?) and *dhanus* are seen in the three surviving left hands. His right foot rests on the ground while the left is upraised. He wears an ornate *mukuṭa*. In spite of its damaged condition the sculpture has not lost its original grace. The fourth pillar from the right has been newly built. The fifth has the Nṛisiṁha panel carved on it. Nṛisiṁha, the Man-Lion, is shown in a standing pose with the demon Hiraṇyakaśyapu on his thighs. The former expresses great anger. He has pierced his lion-nails into the belly of the demon whose head hangs in a helpless manner below. The two right hands of Nṛisiṁha are broken. In one of his left hands is seen a conch, while the other rests on the belly of the demon. He wears an ornate *mukuṭa* and necklace. The sixth pillar has a mutilated figure of a Vaishṇavite deity on its eastern side. Only one left hand holding a conch can be seen. On its south side this pillar has a sculpture of Ardhanārīśvara. This also is damaged. Ardhanārīśvara wears a *jaṭāmukuṭa* on the male side and a *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* on the female side. The right top hand holds a *Nāga*, and the left top hand, a mirror. The lower portion is completely damaged. The pilaster attached to the south wall shows a sculpture of Gajāsuravadhamūrti (?). The *gajachāmara* is seen held at the top with the right and left hands. He wears a *jaṭā-cum-kirīta-mukuṭa*, and is in the *atibhaṅga* pose.

Nrisimha

Pillars of corridor

The pillars of the front corridor are four in number, the two in the centre being elaborately carved. All the pillars are square in section with square bases and semi-circular bands above. There are vertical bands above this. Further up is a box-like projection, then half medallions, and again vertical bands. These show lotus medallions, floral motifs and beaded festoons issuing from *kirīṭa-mukhas*.

Pillars of shrine

The pillars on the two sides of the shrine have *dvārapālas* carved on them. The *dvārapāla* on the left pillar is four-handed. In the top right hand he holds a *paraśu*, the other right hand rests gracefully on his right thigh ; the top left hand holds a *Nāga*, the coils of which can be seen entwining his arm. The elbow of the other left hand rests on the mace. The *dvārapāla* stands gracefully resting on the right foot, with the left bent at the knee and placed behind the right. His head is slightly inclined to the right, thus giving him an appearance of great dignity. He is shown wearing an ornate *mukuṭa* with the *jaṭā* hair

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falling onto his shoulders. He is adorned with *kuṇḍalas*, a pearl necklace, a pearl-*yajnopavīta*, armlets and wristlets. He is obviously Śiva acting as a *dvārapāla*. The *dvārapāla* on the right pillar holds a *triśūla* in his top right hand ; the elbow of the other left hand rests very gracefully on top of the mace, touching the pearl-*yajnopavīta* at the waist. In his top left hand he holds a *Nāga*, while the other rests on the waist. He stands with his weight on the left foot, the right bent and taken behind the left. His entire posture is very dignified.

Gajalakshmi

A seated figure of Gajalakshmī is carved in the centre of a beam, flanked by two elephants on either side. They are shown pouring water over her. Her lotus seat is carved below the beam. Here on either side are lions issuing out of *makara* mouths, the hind legs of the lions being in the mouths of the *makaras*. The former look ferocious and seem eager to extricate themselves from the *makara-mukhas*.

Mandapa ceiling

The ceiling of the veranda-like *maṇḍapa* forms three bays, in transverse fashion, in front of the shrine. Here in the second transverse corridor, on three huge ceiling slabs resting on cross-beams, are carved beautiful sculptures of Brahmā, Umā-Maheśvara and Nārāyaṇa, Brahmā on the left, Śiva in the centre and Vishṇu on the right.

Brahma

The three-headed Brahmā, with a beautiful smiling countenance, is seated in the *vāma-lalitāsana* on a beautifully carved lotus seat (Pl. 61). The face is typically Chālukyan—oval-shaped, with bow-like eyebrows, fish-like eyes, sharp but short nose, and full smiling lips. The two profiles of Brahmā are beautifully carved. They show the same smiling countenance, the same handsome features. The three *jaṭāmukuṭas* of Brahmā are carved with great care. He is very richly ornamented. His *phalaka-hāra* appears very rich and the pearl-*yajnopavīta* and pearl-*kuṇḍalas* look impressive. The figure is rather stocky. His four hands are carved very naturally. In one right hand he holds a *pāśa*, in the other an *akṣamālā*. One left hand has a *kamaṇḍalu*, while the other is surprisingly in the *vara mudrā*. Boon-giving was obviously not considered the function of the right hand alone. Even at Ellora, sometimes this function is performed by the left hand. His armlets are serpentine. His lower garment is tied in a beautiful knot in the front. The two garland-bearers standing on either side are now completely destroyed. The figures of devotees seated below are also gone, leaving behind only their hands to prove their original existence.

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Uma-Mahesvara

The sculptured slab with the figure of Umā-Maheśvara has been fixed in the ceiling of the central bay (Pl. 62.) Śiva is seated with his right foot pendant and resting on a smiling *gaṇa* lying prostrate below. Śiva's head is inclined slightly to the right giving him a dignified appearance. As a result of this inclination of the head, his *jaṭāmukuṭa* is also tilted to the right. In this is seen a *simha-mukha*. Śiva is four-handed. In the top right hand he holds a *triśūla-dhvaja*, while in the other he holds a serpent. Another serpent can be seen in his top left hand; the other left hand is more fruitfully engaged. It goes round Umā, who is seated on his left lap rather uncomfortably and precariously, to rest on her left shoulder and arm. Her right hand rests on Śiva's lap, while the left foot is placed on a smiling *gaṇa* lying down in a prone (?) position. Both Śiva and Pārvatī (Umā) wear *maṇi-yajnopavītas* and are richly ornamented. Their faces are partially defaced, especially that of Pārvatī. On two sides of Umā-Maheśvara are dwarf *Vidyādharas* holding garlands. Below Śiva is the skeletal figure of Kāla. A young boy is seen on the left in a standing position; he may be Kumāra. The horns and ears of Naṇdī, the vehicle of Śiva, are seen on the right of Śiva. The rest of his figure is completely destroyed. Probably the mutilated part of the sculpture also contained a figure of Gaṇeśa who is usually represented in such panels.

Narayana

The third bay has a sculpture of Nārāyaṇa on Ananta (Pl. 63). This is rather awkwardly executed perhaps because the artist was in two minds. He was obviously aiming at both horizontality and verticality at the same time. The entire arrangement of the various figures in the panel reveals this desire of the artist and in the process, Nārāyaṇa looks neither as if standing up nor lying down. Anyway, he is shown reclining on Ādiśesha, who is obviously happy at carrying such a distinguished burden. Nārāyaṇa's face is flat and oval, with sharp features and a fleeting smile on the face. His head rests on one left hand, while the other remains below. One right hand is bent at the elbow and placed near the hoods of Ādiśesha. The other is at the side. Nārāyaṇa is richly ornamented with a *maṇi-yajnopavīta*, an *ekāvali* and a *phalakahāra*. The *udara-bandha* is of pearls. Of the four cognizances of Nārāyaṇa, the Wheel is seen above near his head, next to which is a sword. The *Saṅkha* is seen below, in between the hoods of Ananta and the head of a bearded sage. An attendant is carved near the feet of Nārāyaṇa flourishing maces in his two hands, but he has to be seen from a vertical position. So also the man-Garuḍa, his vehicle, who is seated near his feet, with his two hands in the *namaskāra mudrā*. Above Garuḍa is a curly-haired

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dwarf carrying a lotus. Above him is a female figure holding flowers. Below Nārāyaṇa is another female figure holding a lotus flower in her left hand, and a male figure probably carrying flowers. Lakshmī is surprisingly absent. Normally, in such a panel, she is shown either near his feet, pressing them, or near his head.

Vishnu

On the exterior of the north wall of the shrine is fixed a sculpture of Vishṇu, standing erect, with attendant figures on either side of him. He wears a *kirīṭa-mukuṭa* (Pl. 64) and in the upper right hand carries a lotus. The object in the other right hand, near the waist, is very indistinct. In the upper left hand is a conch, while the other left hand is akimbo. The attendant figures are badly damaged.

Siva

On the south wall of the shrine, on the exterior side, is an eight-handed image of Śiva dancing in *atibhaṅga* (Pl. 65). The disfigured *Taṇḍu* below his feet suggests that he may be dancing the Tāṇḍava. The top right hand carries a *ghaṇṭā* (bell), the lower, some musical instrument, the next is in some *mudrā* that cannot be made out as the hand is partially broken. The next carries a *triśūla*. Śiva's left top hand holds a *Nāga*, next an indistinct object, the next is broken but shows some *mudrā*, while the bottom one rests on the thigh of the bent foot. Śiva's favourite vehicle Naṇdī is seen on the right of him but only the head can be seen. In between the feet of Śiva is the skeletal figure of Kāla (?). Pārvatī is seated at the extreme left corner, an interested spectator.

Temple No. 2

The sculptures on the pillar here are mostly in a damaged condition. On the outside of the front pillar is carved a figure of Vishṇu. He is four-handed and has his personal attributes. The same pillar, on the south face, has a sculpture of Umā-Maheśvara. They are both seated in a joyful mood. A dwarf is carved on the east face of the pillar, leaning on an elongated jar. Another facade pillar has an unfinished image of Sūrya with lotuses in his two hands. Two unfinished figures are on either side of him and they may be Ushā and Pratyushā. On its north face, this pillar has the sculpture of Nṛisiṁha killing the demon Hiraṇya-kaśyapu. The former has torn open the abdomen of the demon with his nails. His two upper hands hold his personal attributes.

Pilaster

The pilaster on the left of the shrine has mutilated figures on the front and north sides, while on the south side, has an image of Mahishāsur-mardinī killing the demon Mahishā. Mahishā's head is in human form while the rest of the body is that of a buffalo. The goddess has four

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hands. The upper right hand carries a *chakra*, while with the lower right hand she pierces the body of the demon with the *triśūla*. The upper left hand carries a *śaṇkha*, while the lower is placed on her lion vehicle. The pilaster on the right of the shrine has on its north side a four-handed sculpture of Gaṇeśa, seated with the right leg pendant.

Central bay The ceiling of the central bay has an *Ashtadikpāla-paṭa*. The ceiling slab is divided into nine square compartments. In the centre is a sculpture of three-faced Brahmā, seated in the *padmāsana*, on a lotus seat, flanked by standing devotees. He holds an *akshamālā* in one right hand and a *kamaṇḍalu* in one left hand. The objects in the other two hands are indistinct. On the right of Brahmā is Agni on a ram, holding a lotus in the right hand, while the left one is upraised. On Brahmā's left is Yama on a buffalo, holding a lotus in the right hand, with the left hand upraised. Below Brahmā, in the central compartment, is Indra on Airāvata. On his left is Kubera on a horse. Iśāna is seen on the right hand, the other right being in *abhaya* as required in the *Śrītattvanidhi* text. In one left hand he carries a cobra, while the other rests on the back of a bull. The other three panels are badly damaged and no sculptures can, therefore, be identified. It is obvious that this panel, showing the Eight Guardians of the Quarters, was executed at a time when their positions had not become fixed. According to the texts, Indra guards the Eastern Quarter, Varuṇa the Western, Kubera the Northern and Yama the Southern. Agni guards the South-Eastern Quarter, Niruti the South-Western, while Vāyu guards the North-Western and Iśāna the North-Eastern Quarter. In the central panel should have been carved a figure of Śiva or Vishṇu, but here, in the central panel, they have been replaced by Brahmā. Yama has left his position in the South and occupies the Northern Quarter. Agni has left his South-Eastern Quarter and usurped Yama's place. Kubera has deserted his Northern Quarter and gone to the North-Eastern Quarter of Íśāna. The latter has left his Quarter to occupy the Quarter of Agni. This can only mean than when these temples were built the *Vāstuśāstra* and *Silpaśāstra* traditions had not yet been set or crystallised. This is indicative of the early construction of these groups of temples at Aihole.

Ceiling slab The ceiling slab of Huchchimalli-gudī confirms the belief that iconographic tradition was yet in a process of evolution. In this temple, the ceiling slab of the antechamber is divided into nine square compartments. At the four corners are lotuses. The central square also has a lotus. On the south is Vishṇu on Garuḍa in place of Yama on a buffalo.

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On the north, Brahmā on a goose replaces Kubera on a horse. Varuṇa is displaced by Śiva on *Nandī* in the Western Quarter. Only Indra on Airāvata keeps his place, the Eastern Quarter.

LAD KHAN

Pillars

The pillars of the Lad Khan portico have some interesting sculptures carved on them, many of them being amorous couples. The eastern face of the pillar on the left of the entrance has one such couple engaged in love-play under a shady tree. The posture of the female is striking, as she stands resting on her left foot, while the right is bent at the knee and thrown back behind the left foot. From the waist upwards she reclines heavily on her spouse. She has balanced herself by resting her left hand on her own lower garment, while the right hand is placed on the chest and waist of her lover. The leftward bend of the body is balanced by the slight inclination of the head to the right, and this lends great charm to her figure. Her face shows traces of a beautiful fleeting smile. Her spouse stands erect. Considering her weight this must be considered a creditable performance! With the left hand he has drawn her close to him, while with the right he lends support by holding her right hand. His face reveals his great pleasure (Pls. 66, 67).

Yamuna

The left side pillar has a sculpture of Yamunā standing on a tortoise (Pl. 68). She appears stocky as she stands with her weight on her left foot, giving the impression of heaviness. She has two dwarf female attendants on either side of her and on two sides above are flying male figures. The pillar on the right of the entrance has an amorous couple, but the female figure is now completely obliterated.

Amorous couples

On another pillar is seen a couple in a loving embrace. Both the partners are apparently in a very amorous mood. The female has entwined her spouse with both her arms, resting her head happily on his shoulder. Naturally, the spouse beams happily at her.

The female partner on another pillar obviously has less initiative. She has, however, made a promising start, and has placed her right hand on the shoulder of her spouse, making him happy in the process. His left hand is on her shoulder. They both stand under the protective shade of a tree (Pl. 69).

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The female partner on another pillar is more sober. She stands resting on her right foot, with the left bent and taken behind. Her spouse looks happy and has placed his left hand on her shoulder, holding her right hand in the process (Pl. 70).

Brahmacharin An interesting sculpture here is that of a Brahmachārin in the company of a young female, carved on the southern face of the pillar at the extreme left (Pl. 71). There is nothing wrong with the young woman, excepting her donkey-face! The Brahmachārin has his left hand upraised, in which he holds a *kamaṇḍalu*, as if to strike the young woman. The young lady seems to be trying to repulse his attack by holding his upraised left hand. Above them can be seen a banana tree.

Couple A beautiful amorous couple is carved inside a half medallion (Pl. 72). This time, the male is seen taking the initiative. The lady is seated leaning backwards on her left hand. The male partner approaches her from behind and has bent down to caress his spouse. He has placed his left hand on her left shoulder, her right is on her right shoulder. He has brought his face close to hers, and the lady responds willingly by lifting up her face and holding her spouse close to her face by his hair.

Single figures In another medallion can be seen a young lady in a very amorous mood. She has bent her body at three places in the *tribhaṇga* mode. Her amorous posture has attracted the attention of a female dwarf who looks up in surprise. Unfortunately, the young lady has no one to make love to, except a monkey on her left (Pl. 73).

In another medallion is carved a vigorous young male, playing with a long cobra. Another young man, seated in an awkward position, holding two cobras is seen in another medallion. Another half-medallion depicts a couple accompanied by two dwarfs on either side.

Brahma One of the portico pillars has an unusual sculpture of Brahmā. It is carved on the southern face of the third pillar of the extreme right row of pillars. He has only one face. In two of his four hands, however, he holds a lotus and a *kamaṇḍalu* and in the second right hand an *akshamālā*. This confirms his identification. Another striking peculiarity about this Brahmā is his lower garment which looks like an *ūrdhvaliṅga* (Pl. 74). Brahmā is accompanied by two ladies, probably his consorts Sarasvatī and Sāvitri. The one on the right is perhaps Sarasvatī. She is seated rather awkwardly, with the left foot pendant and the right folded. The elbow of her upraised arm right rests on the knee of her

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86. Huchchappayyā-gudī. Loose sculpture of Śiva as Dvārapala.

87. Huchchappayyā-gudī. Nṛisimha killing Hiranyakaśyapu, on exterior of west wall of the shrine.

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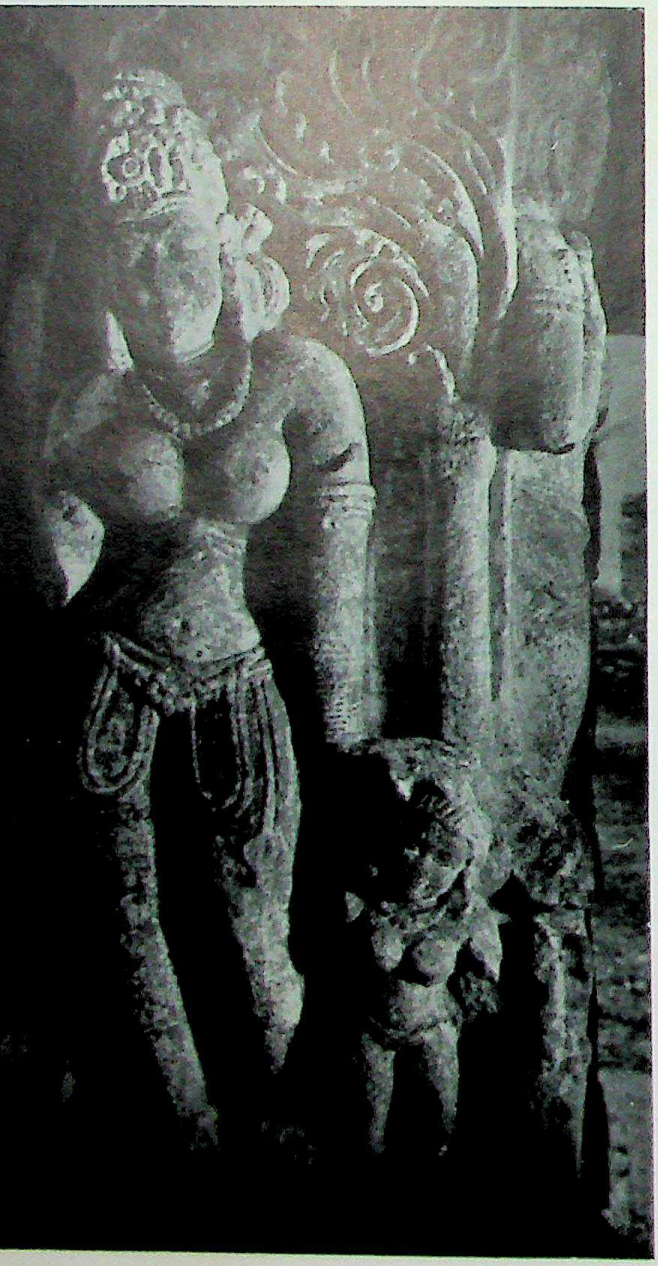
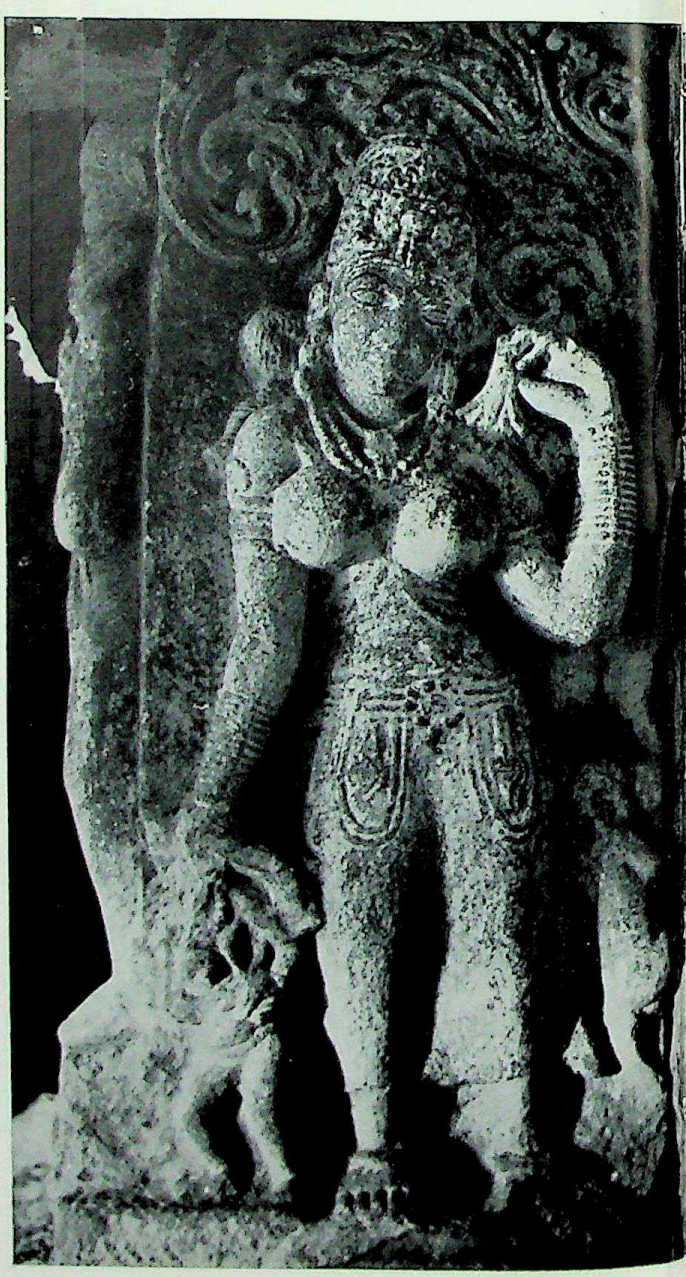
88. Huchchappayyā Mātha. Female figure on the facade on right of entrance to the main hall.

89. Huchchappayyā Mātha. Female figure on the facade on left of entrance to the main hall.





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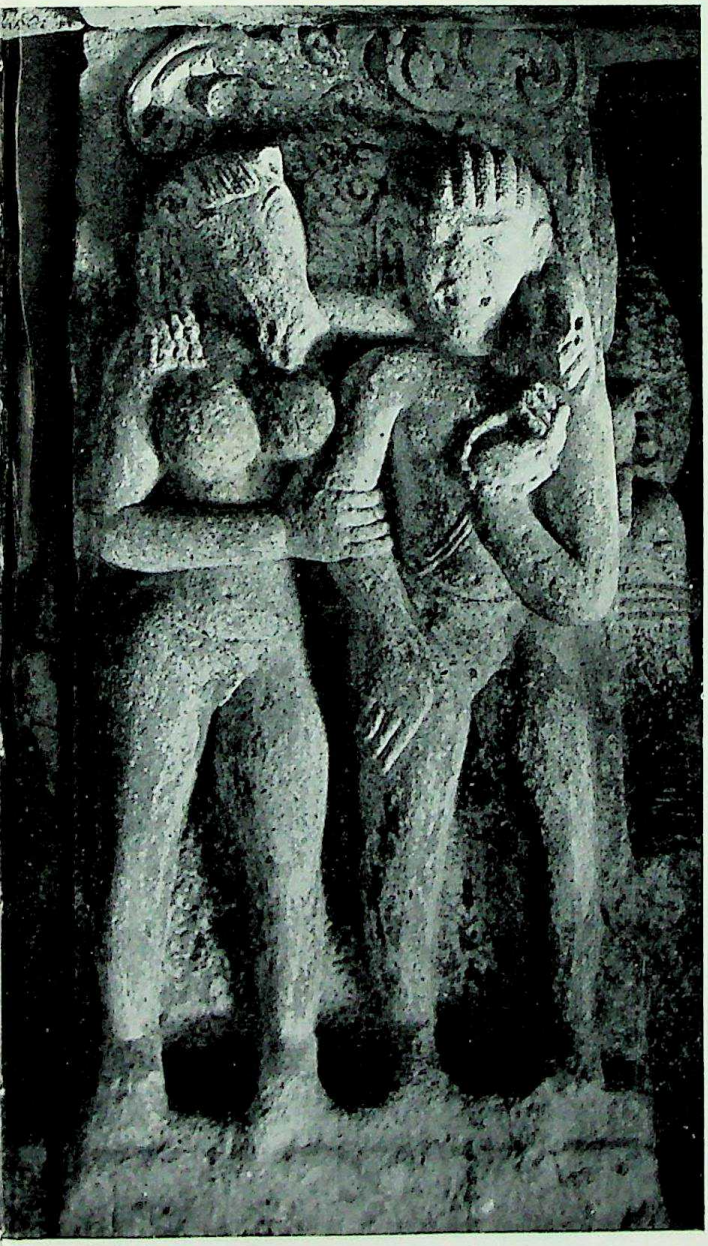
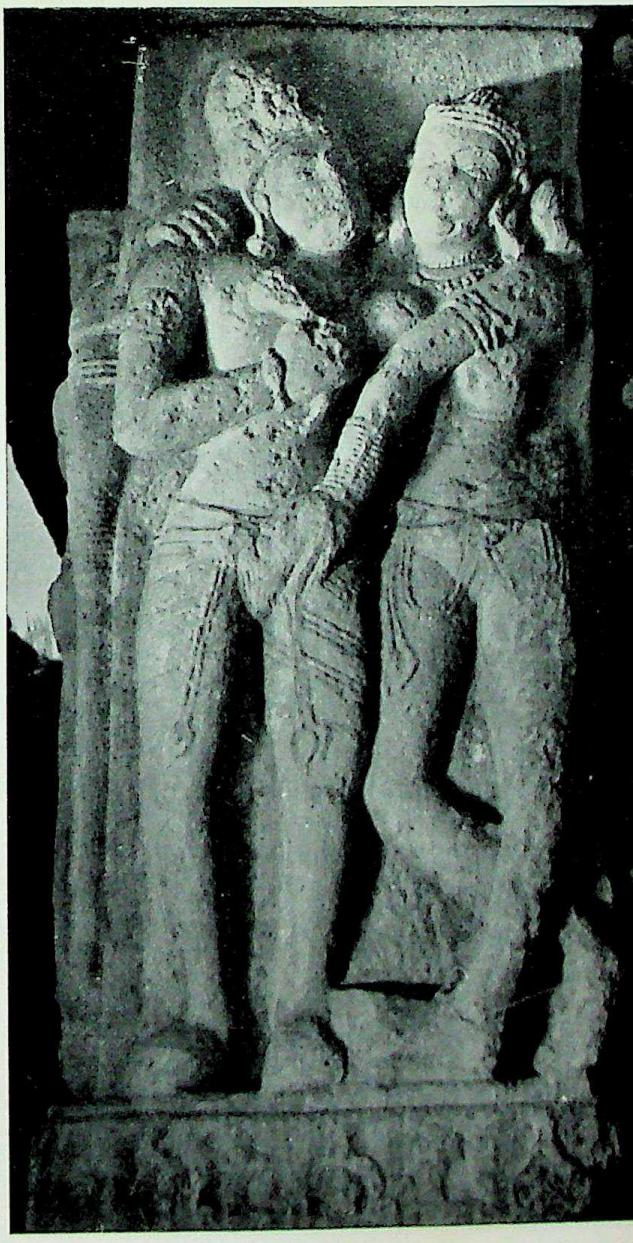
90. Huchchappayyā Mātha. Couple on facade, on left of the entrance.
91. Huchchappayyā Mātha. Couple on pillar on right of the facade on the north.





90 91

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92

92. Huchchappayyā Mātha. Sculpture on the facade on right of entrance to main hall.

93

93. Huchchappayyā Mātha. Couple on the facade at right of entrance.

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94. Huchchappayyā Mātha. Couple on eastern face of pillar in front of the facade.

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95. Huchchimalli-gudī. Kārtikeya on the ceiling of maṇḍapa.

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96. Huchchappayyā Mātha. Nārayaṇa on Ananta, on the ceiling.
97. Huchchimalli-gudī. Loose Saptamātrikā slab inside the temple.

97

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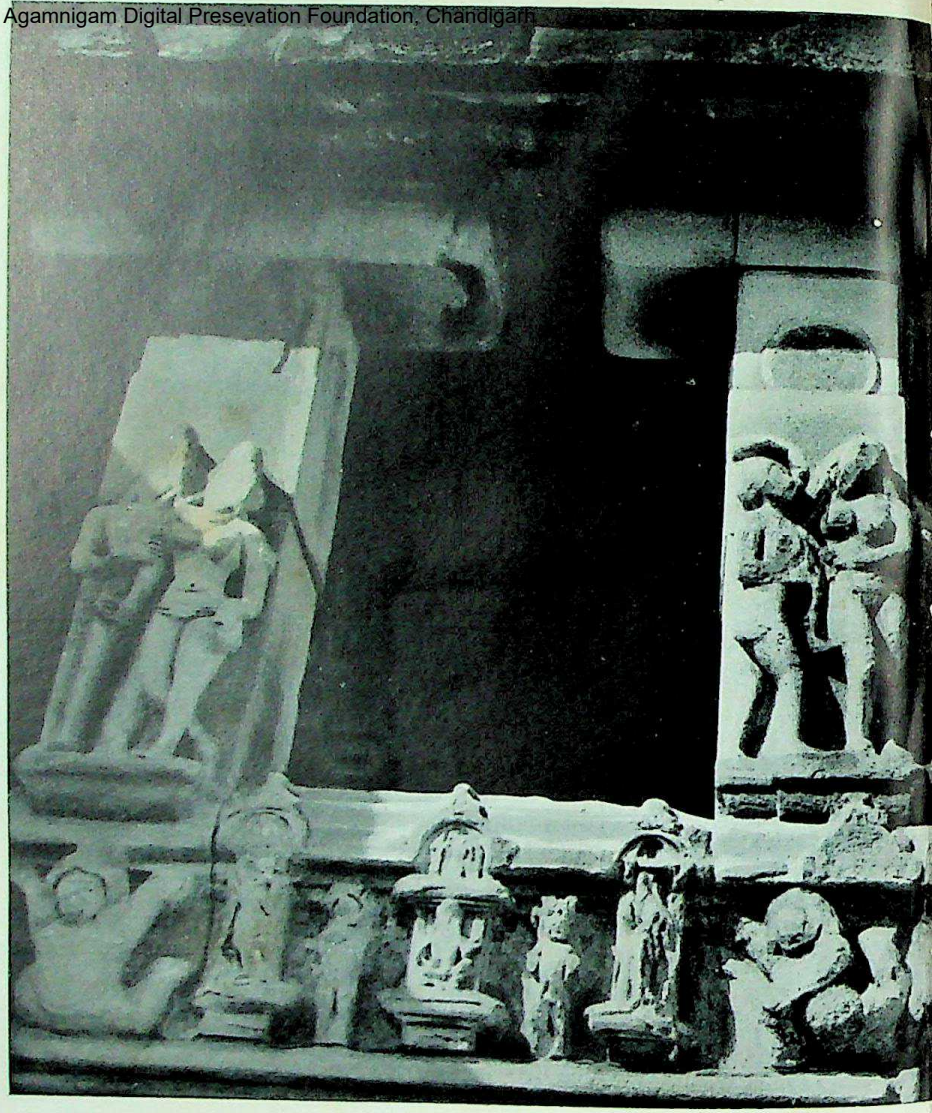
98



99

98. Durgā temple. Couple on pillar on left of the mukhamaṇḍapa.
99. Durgā temple. Sculptures on pillars.

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right leg. Her face is turned upwards. Her left hand is on the right thigh of Brahmā. Brahmā's consort on the left is also seated awkwardly, holding what looks like a ghee-pot for her Lord and looking up towards him. This crude sculpture of Brahmā, with one face, and his two indistinguishable female companions, would indicate the fact that iconographic tradition had not yet properly evolved. This will be seen repeatedly at Aihole, supporting its early dating.

Varaha-lanchhana

The Varāha-lāñchhana of the Chālukyas is beautifully carved in a medallion on a pillar. It shows a boar, a lamp, a wheel, and a conch. This is carved on the pillar on the right of the entrance to the portico, on its western face.

The *dvārapālas* of the shrine are not good enough to attract much notice.

TARABASAPPA TEMPLE

Matrikas

The Chālukyas of Bādāmi worshipped the Saptamātṛikās, all their inscriptions making reference to them. For instance, *Putranam sapta* 10(10) *ka-matribhis-Sapta-matribhik abhivarddhitanam abhivarddhitanam Karttikeyapari-rakshana-prapata*... (Copper-plate Grant of Pulakeśin I, dated *Saka* 411 (A.D. 489-90). It is not surprising, therefore, that in their temples at Aihole, the Mātṛikas should play an important role in the sculptural themes. The best example is provided by Rāvaṇa-Phadi where they are seen standing in the left chamber of the *maṇḍapa*. Tārabasappā has a loose slab on which the Mātṛika panel is carved (Pl. 75). A similar slab is found in the Huchchimalli temple. The seven Mātṛikas are flanked by Śiva on the right and Gaṇeśa on the left, their vehicles carved below on the pedestal. Beginning from the right, Śiva is seen first, seated in the *ardha-paryaṅkāsana*, with his left hand resting on his left lap and his right hand holding a roughly hewn *paraśu*. His vehicle Nandī is carved below on his left. Next to him is Brāhmī, who can be recognized by her three roughly carved faces. Māheśvari who is seated next to her has her right foot pendant. She is easily recognized by her bull vehicle, which is seen on the left of her. She is also seated with the right foot pendant. The face of the next Mātṛika is damaged, but from the visible outlines, she may be Vārāhī. Below her is carved a rough figure of a boar. Aindrī, seated next to her in the *savya-lalitāsana*, can be easily recognized by the elephant carved below her.

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Chāmuṇḍā is also seated in the *savya-lalitāsana* next to her. She is flanked by Gaṇeśa on her left who is seated in the *ardhaparyṅkāsana*.

Mahisha-surmardini

Inside the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* is a loose sculpture of Mahishāsurmardinī carved on a stone slab (Pl. 76). The goddess is shown using only two of her four hands for destroying the buffalo-demon. Her posture gives the impression of great dynamism and force. However, she seems to be exerting all her strength without any visible effort, standing with her left foot bent and resting on the back of the buffalo-demon, pressing him down with great force. The entire weight of her lithe body seems to weigh the demon down into the earth. With her lower left hand she holds the mouth of the demon, turning it up towards her and exposing his neck fully. With the upraised right hand, she drives her long *triśūla* into his exposed neck. While the demon is held mercilessly, her lower right hand, holding a big sword, is getting ready to cut off the head of the buffalo-demon. The upper left hand is folded and upraised only to give balance to the figure. In this hand the goddess holds a *ghaṇṭā*. Her entire posture is full of grace and serenity and her face reveals a charming smile. The violent act in which she is engaged has obviously not disturbed her. Evil has to be destroyed and the world made safe for Good. She is performing a sacred duty and is obviously happy that she is doing it. The entire sculpture is full of great force, dynamic energy and graceful dignity. The slightly inclined head of the goddess and the beautiful smile on her face imparts to her majesty and serenity. The Chālukya artist is seen at his best here, this in spite of the fact that the sculpture is now partially defaced.

NARAYAN TEMPLE

Surya

(In the shrine of the Nārāyaṇ temple is a finely carved sculpture of Sūrya (Pl. 77).) This temple may, therefore, be legitimately termed Sūrya-Nārāyaṇ temple. Sculptures of the Sun-god are rare but the one in this temple is one of the finest of its kind. (Sūrya stands erect in graceful dignity on a pedestal on which is carved a tiny chariot, driven by seven horses and his charioteer Aruṇa, holding lotuses in his two hands.) The wheels of the chariot and the horses can be clearly seen. [Sūrya here does not wear shoes. It is obvious that this sculpture was carved at a period when the *Silpaśāstra* tradition and the Puranic legend regarding him had not yet fully crystallised. Later works declared that

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if Sūrya were portrayed without his shoes, the sculptor carving him thus would contract leprosy. Sūrya here is very richly ornamented. His strikingly rich necklace along with the pearl *kaṇṭhā*, the many-stringed pearl-*yajnopavīta*, and the pearl-*kamarapaṭṭā*, the pearl anklets and the very decorative *karaṇḍa-mukuṭa* attract attention. The face is typically Chālukyan. The black polished stone used for this sculpture was specially chosen for its very pliant quality. The chisel of the sculptor has created a beautifully modulated and well-proportioned figure, so that in spite of the heavy ornamentation, Sūrya still retains his spirituality. On his two sides he is flanked by Ushā and Pratyūshā. It must not be forgotten that in the Hindu tradition, Sūrya is one of the *Navagrahas*. He must, therefore, be accompanied by the other eight *Grahas*. Of course, the iconographic tradition as it developed did not require this. But the Chālukya artist knew this Vedic tradition and therefore sculpted the *Ashtagrahas* Soma, Guru, Sukra, Budha, Maṅgala, Rāhu, Ketu and Śani on the decorative slab behind him.

HUCHCHAPPAYYA-GUDI

On the parapet wall of the entrance to the temple are carved the two *Nidhis*. The pot-bellied Padma Nidhi is on the left of the entrance, seated in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* (Pl. 78). His face is defaced. In his right hand he holds a lotus while the left rests on his left lap. He wears a rich necklace and a pearl-*yajnopavīta*, as well as the other usual ornaments. The pot-bellied figure of Śaṅkha Nidhi is seated on the right of the entrance, also in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* (Pl. 79). His face is defaced and the conch in the right hand has disappeared along with the hand. The right foot is also destroyed, but the left hand still rests on his left lap.

Couples

There is an interesting couple on the pillar left of the entrance. It shows an elderly person with a long flowing beard and flowing moustache in the company of a young girl with a donkey face (Plate 80). The man has curly hair and looks like a Chinese mandarin. His beard and curled moustache are both carefully trimmed and shaped. He is obviously fond of the young woman for he has placed his left arm around her waist and she responds by placing her right hand round his neck and shoulders. It is difficult to make out what the artist or the *sthāpaka* had in mind when he created this couple. Probably he wanted to say

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that at that age any young woman looks good to a man! The *dhoti* of the male figure falls into horizontal folds and shows a long *kacchha* in front.

A similar sculpture is carved on the right of the entrance. Here the donkey-faced young lady is on the left and the bearded man on the right as one faces the panel. The face of the man is partially defaced, giving him, with his flowing beard and moustaches, the appearance of a donkey The lady has her left arm around his neck and on his shoulders, while he has placed his right hand on her waist.

Siva as dvarapala

On the pilaster, right of the entrance, is Śiva, acting as *dvārapāla* (Pl. 81). He stands resting on his left foot, with the right entwined round his mace that rests on the ground below. One of his two right hands lie on the mace. The upper right hand is seen above, but the object in it is now destroyed. One left hand rests gracefully on the waist, while the other left hand holds a tiny *paraśu* on two fingers. Śiva is very richly ornamented. The most interesting thing, however, is his *yajñopavīta*. It is made of flowers, that is, it is a *puṣpa-yajnopavīta*. One important characteristic of Chālukya sculpture seems to be the *yajnopavīta*. This was normally made of cotton or silk thread. The Chālukya *sthāpaka*, however, preferred to use pearls or flowers. This probably reflects a practice current at the time, indicating an era of economic prosperity, brought in by Chālukya conquests under Kīrtivarman and Maṅgaleśa. Śiva here wears a rich *phalaka-hāra*, decorative armlets, a rich belly-band and other ornaments. The other very striking ornament is the armlet. It has a *kīrtimukha* carved on it and this is rather interesting. This *dvārapāla* is impressive in many respects, giving an impression of strength and creating an atmosphere of security.

The pilaster on the left of the entrance door has another figure of Siva as *dvārapāla*. He stands gracefully balanced on the right foot, while the left leg is bent at the knee and thrown behind the right leg. In one right hand he holds a *triśūla*, while the other rests on his waist. He holds a cobra in one left hand, the other resting on his mace and on the waist. He also wears a *puṣpa-yajnopavīta*, similar to the one worn by the other *dvārapāla*, described above, as well as a *kīrtimukha* armlet.

Amorous couple

The south side of this pilaster has a badly carved amorous couple. On the northern side of this pilaster is a Kanarese inscription of four lines.

Siva dancing

The ceiling of the portico has a beautiful sculpture of Śiva dancing with great verve (Pl. 82). He is in *atibhaṅga*. His right leg is bent at

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the knee and lifted as for a dance step. His left is also bent at the knee. This is a very graceful stance. The disposition of his eight hands has been done with great skill. The lowest right hand is turned with considerable grace to the right. This movement of the right hand is balanced by the movement of one left hand that curves in the opposite direction to rest on the waist. The upper right hand bends at the elbow and swerves back towards the face, dangling a bell. A left hand, which is partly destroyed, provides the necessary balance. One right hand moves gracefully to the right and makes a *mudrā*. A left hand is thrown in the opposite direction, holding an *aṅkuśa-dhvaja*. One right hand bends at the elbow and swerves below, holding a cobra. Even the latter fits into the general scheme. A left hand makes a balanced movement downwards to hold a *pāśa*. It is a great credit to the Chālukya artist that he has combined balance and poise with a suggestion of movement. The body of Śiva is perfectly proportioned ; the multiple hands fit into his system so naturally. His handsome face, which is thrown back with graceful dignity, lends great charm to the figure. Śiva's body pulsates with life and exudes an atmosphere of spirituality. It has rhythm and grace. This is truly a masterpiece of Chālukya art. Such wonderful balance and harmony is not easily achieved. The figure of Pārvatī, who stands on his left, has grace and dignity, in keeping with the general atmosphere. She is an entranced spectator. She stands reclining on the left foot, with the right slightly bent. Her oval face with sharp features, her full breasts and small waist, lend her great physical charm. On her waist is a child, probably Kumāra. Her right hand rests on a female dwarf who seems to find the weight unsupportable. A dwarf is also seen near the feet of Pārvatī. Bhriṅgī or Kāla (?) is near the feet of Śiva, while a musician, beating a *mṛidaṅga*, is on the right of him. Above is Gaṇeśa in a standing posture.

Entablatures

A number of interesting sculptures, small in size, are carved on the entablatures of the hall. On the left, as one enters, is seen a richly carved entablature, with geometric designs and dwarfs in extremely funny poses and playful moods. Above, in the centre, is a small-sized Varāha. His stance is very forceful, standing as he is in the *ālīdhāsana*. One of his right hands is placed on his posteriors, while the other holds a *Chakra*. Pṛithvī is seated on his left hand. On the right, on the entablature opposite, is a sculpture of Nṛisiṁha (Pl. 83). The dwarfs below are beautifully carved and are shown in a variety of playful moods. Nṛisiṁha has two of his hands upraised. Hiraṇyakaśyapu is shown trying to flee in terror.

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On another beam of the hall entablature is a sculpture of Mahālakshmī, seated in the *paryaṅkāsana*. On two sides of her are beautifully carved elephants holding water-pots in their trunks and pouring water over her head. On two sides of Mahālakshmī are *Yālis* mounted by dwarfs. Just above is a large full-blown lotus in a square panel.

Dikpalas

On the beam that rests on the two pillars of the hall is carved a beautiful dancing Śiva. On this beam, from inside, are carved the following *Dikpālas:* 1) north-east corner, Iśāna on Nandī ; 2) east, Indra on Airāvata ; 3) Kubera on horse (?).

On another beam are seen the following *Dikpālas:* 1) north, Agni on ram ; 2) south, Yama on buffalo ; 3) north-west corner, Vāyu on stag. Half of the beam on which Vāyu is carved is now destroyed. It may have carried the eighth *Dikpāla*, Varuṇa.

Here Kubera has changed his place. His position in the north has been taken by Agni who has left his south-west corner. In this panel, again, Śiva appears as a *Dikpāla*, near the shrine entrance. In one right hand he holds a *triśūla*, while the other rests on the right lap and the mace. He holds a cobra in the left upper hand, the other resting on his left lap. He wears a pearl-*yajnopavīta*.

Near shrine doorway

On either side of the shrine doorway, on the north and south walls, are fixed the sculptured slabs of Gaṇeśa and Mahishāsurmardinī, over which are miniature *Chaitya*-arch decorations. Inside these arches are smiling human faces looking out. Gaṇeśa with four hands is on left of the shrine entrance, seated with the left leg pendant. The object in one right hand is indistinct, while the other lies on the right lap. One left hand holds a *paraśu*, while in the other he holds his favourite dish of *laḍḍus* in a *droṇa-pātra*. His trunk is turned to the left. This sculpture is very crudely executed.

Mahisha-surmardini

Opposite to him, on the right of the shrine entrance is the sculptured slab of Mahishāsurmardinī with four hands (Pl. 84). She is partially defaced. The buffalo-demon here appears big and forbidding. The goddess is of course not afraid. With one left hand, which is now broken, she lifts his face upward to expose his neck. With one forceful movement of another right hand, she plants the long *triśūla* into his neck. While one left hand holds a conch, the object in one right hand cannot be identified as it has become indistinct with age.

Dvarapalas

The shrine entrance is guarded by two *dvārapālas*. On the left of the entrance is seen Śiva acting as a *dvārapāla*. His peculiar pose

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gives him movement and grace. While his body above the waist faces the visitor and is static, the part below the waist shows movement as he turns himself to the right, lifting his right leg to rest on the mace on his left, holding this turned leg in position with his left hand. The object in his right upper hand is broken, while the other is in the *kataka-simhakarna mudrā*. In one left hand he is shown carrying flowers, which is rather unusual. Probably the flowers are for the deity of the shrine. He wears a highly decorative *mukuṭa*, a pearl-*yajnopavīta*, *kīrtimukha* armlets, and the other usual ornaments.

The other *dvārapāla* stands majestically on the right of the entrance. With such a forbidding guardian, one need be afraid of no one! He stands in quiet dignity, balanced on the left foot, with the right bent and turned to cross the left (Pl. 85). One right and one left hand rest on the waist. One right hand carries a *triśūla* lightly on two fingers, while the other left hand holds a cobra. His figure is well proportioned and the multiple hands look natural. His face is calm and serene, the entire stance and posture being dignified. Śiva here wears a high *jaṭā-mukuṭa*, which considering his imposing height, seems of the right size. The big mace on his right is used for support. He also wears a pearl-*yajnopavīta* and *kīrtimukha* armlets. The lower garment is shown hanging below on the sides.

Close by is a sculptured slab also showing Śiva as *dvārapāla* (Pl. 86). He has a very graceful stance as he stands resting on the right foot that heavily rests on his big mace for support. His *dvibhaṅga* posture heightens his charm. One right hand holds a cobra, which has entwined the forearm of Śiva. The other right hand rests on the mace. One left hand holds either a *triśūla* or a *paraśu*, while the other left hand is broken. Though the face of Śiva is partly defaced, the sculpture has not lost its original charm.

Nrisimha

In the back wall of the shrine, on the exterior and inside a niche, is a sculptured slab of Nṛisiṁha destroying Hiraṇyakaśyapu (Pl. 87). Nṛisiṁha is shown neither seated nor standing. In one right hand he carries a Wheel and in one left hand, a conch. With one right and one left hand, he has torn open the belly of Hiraṇyakaśyapu who is seen lying helplessly on his lap, his hands hanging below. In the left hand Niṛsiṁha holds a shield and in the right a mace. This is very peculiar because traditionally he should carry a sword in one hand. Probably this was because iconographic tradition had not yet become set.

Gajasuravadhamurti

On the exterior south wall of the shrine, inside a niche, is a badly damaged six-handed figure of Gajāsuravadhamūrtī, trampling upon Apsamāra.

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HUCHCHAPPAYYA MATHA

This temple stands facing the east and is a simple structure with a plain roof without any *śikhara*. The central hall is supported by six pillars and two pilasters, the four central pillars making a rectangle, 11′ 3″ in breadth and 10′ 8″ in depth. In this rectangle is a Nandī, seated facing the shrine, which is 7′ 2″ in breadth and 9′ in depth. The entrance door of the latter has a man-Garuḍa carved on the lintel. Inside the shrine is a *liṅga*. From the ground-plan of the temple it may be assigned to the third or fourth decade of the 6th century A.D.

Female sculptures

A number of sculptures are carved on the facade of the temple. On either side of the entrance door are seen female figures standing under trees. The one on the right stands resting on the right foot, with the upper part of her body slightly inclined to the right (Pl. 88). The head also is tilted in the same direction. She is rather heavily proportioned. Her right forearm is broken, while the left rests on the head of a female dwarf standing on the left of her. In her crown can be seen a large flower. A similar figure is carved on the left of the entrance (Pl. 89). She is also rather heavy in build and stands with her right hand on the head of a dwarf on her right. She is, however, a little more elegant than the other. A monkey is seen on her left. Her left hand holds a flower and her crown is decorative.

Amorous couples

On the facade of the temple is carved a familiar couple. It is a young lady with a donkey-face making love to a willing *Bramachārin* (Pl. 90). She holds him firmly, her left hand going round the neck and resting on his shoulder. With her right hand she is holding his right hand firmly. The *Bramachārin* looks willing enough. His right hand rests on the thigh, while the left hand, which is on his chest, holds a rosary.

Another couple here appears to be very much in love (Pl. 91). This sculpture is carved on the pillar at the extreme right end of the facade, on its northern face. The young woman is obviously bold. She has placed her right hand round her lover's shoulder and has pressed herself close to him. Her right breast is against his chest. The left hand travels in between her breasts to untie the knot of his lower garment. The young man has drawn her close to him with his left hand, while his right hand is on his chest, close to her breast.

The couple carved on the facade right of the entrance is very interesting (Pl. 92). The male has a bangle in his right hand, which he is

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placing on his bride's hand, his left hand holding her right hand. The young lady here seems to be in a very sober mood. She stands almost erect, with her left hand hanging loosely by her side, the right placed in the hand of her spouse. She has a good figure. The male has great dignity, grace and poise. He stands with his weight on the right foot, with the left slightly bent. The head is slightly tilted to the right as he gets ready to put on the bangle.

A very happy young couple is carved on the facade, at the extreme right end (Pl. 93). The male stands balanced on the right foot, with the left leg slightly bent. He has his left hand on the shoulder of his spouse, while with the right he holds her right hand, which touches his thigh. The lower garment shows horizontal folds. His smiling countenance tells of his happiness. The female partner shows more movement ; she is obviously moving towards him. Her left foot touches the left foot of her spouse, while the left, which is seen behind, is poised for a forward step. Her left hand rests gracefully on her waist. Her well-proportioned body and handsome smiling face lend her great charm and vivacity.

A very amorous couple (Pl. 94) is carved on the eastern face of a pillar of the facade. The most striking feature of the sculpture is the extremely awkward position of the head of the male. It looks as if it has come off its joint. The lady here is very willing. She has placed both her hands on the crown of her spouse. Probably she is trying to fix his dislocated head ! In spite of the awkward position of the head, he has taken her close to himself with his left hand, which is seen on her back. With the right he has lifted her left leg right up to his waist, making her support her body on her right leg. Her breast, which is larger than life-size is pressed against his chest. Her face is slightly damaged.

Brahma and rishis

A ceiling slab in the hall has a sculpture of Brahmā, accompanied by *rishis*. The three-faced Brahmā is seated on an ugly goose (*haṁsa*) which is on a double-petalled lotus. In the lower right hand Brahmā carries an *akshamālā*, in the lower left hand, a *kamaṇḍalu*. In the upper right and left hands, he probably carries *sruk* and *sruv* (sacrificial spoons). His face is slightly defaced, but the profiles of Brahmā, however, are intact, showing very sharply sculptured features. On the right of Brahmā is a sage in the *namaskāra mudrā*. He seems to have brought with him a bucketful of ghee. Another person behind him is seen rushing in with offerings for Brahmā. A skeletal sage, accompanied by another who looks well-fed, are seen above, running in with offerings. Four more sages are on Brahmā's left, either carrying offerings or in the *namaskāra mudrā*.

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Siva on Nandi

On another ceiling slab is a fine sculpture of Śiva on Nandī. In the upper right and left hands he holds cobras. One right hand seems to be in the *vitarka mudrā*, while the other left hand rests on the lap near the hump of the Nandī. In spite of his defaced face, Śiva looks handsome and dignified, with a perfectly proportioned body. On his right is an exquisitely carved figure of Pārvatī, seated on the back of Nandī, close to her lord. She holds a flower in the right hand, while her left is on the lap of her Lord. She has a perfect figure and her smiling countenance lends her great charm. A female attendant holds an umbrella over the head of Pārvatī. Near Nandī is a skeletal figure of Bhṛingī. Another male figure is seen next to him. Above Bhṛingī is a *chaurī*-bearer attendant of Śiva. Next to him is probably a *gaṇa* (dwarf) standing with his two hands on the waist.

Narayana on Ananta

On another ceiling slab is Nārāyaṇa on Ananta (Pl. 96) seated comfortably with his left leg folded and resting on Ādiśesha and the right leg also folded but kept upright resting on the right foot. One of his two right hands rests on the knee of the right leg. One left hand is on the left lap. The upper right hand carries a *chakra*, while the upper left carries a *śaṅkha* (conch). Behind the head of Nārāyaṇa can be seen the five hoods of Ādiśesha. On two sides of him are female flying figures carrying offerings. Below are two male flying figures also carrying food-offerings. Nārāyaṇa is obviously in a happy mood as can be judged by his smiling countenance. His body is well modulated. The slight tilt of the head to the right lends much charm to the figure. The two flying female figures are also beautifully proportioned and graceful, with attractive postures. The other flying figures are full of verve and vivacity. The entire panel is well conceived. The artist has obviously not forgotten the locale, because on the background can be seen the foaming watery waves.

HUCHCHIMALLI-GUDI

Karttikeya

On the ceiling slab of the portico of this temple is a sculpture of Kārttikeya (Pl. 95), mounted on his peacock vehicle. The artist has made even the *Mayūra* (peacock) mount look happy. Kārttikeya has his right leg pendant. His left leg is folded, and he seems to be getting ready to dismount. His right leg is taken back and raised as if preparing to strike with his staff. His left hand rests on the knee of the folded left leg.

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In this hand he holds an *utpala* (lotus). Kārttikeya's head is slightly inclined to the right. As his head tilts to the right, it also bends down to break into a beautiful smile. His entire posture is indicative of happiness. Though the artist has taken care to give balance to the sculpture, the body below the waist looks rather awkward and lacks relief. However, the flying male figures on the two sides of his mount are beautiful and utterly charming specimens of their type. The flying male on Kārttikeya's left has gusto. He has his left hand on the posteriors while the right hand is gracefully lifted up. The head is tilted beautifully to the right. His stance and posture are very attractive, and the whole figure exhibits balance and a beautiful rhythmic movement. The charming smile on the face and the grace of movement make this sculpture one of the best at Aihole.

Flying figures

A charming flying male is carved on the right of Kārttikeya. He has his hands folded in the *namaskāra mudrā*. In between these two is another flying male, in a swimming posture. On the two sides above are two more flying males bearing garlands for Kārttikeya. The entire panel reveals the fondness of the artist for rhythm and movement.

Saptamatrika slab

The Saptamātṛikā slab lying inside the temple is of great iconographic interest (Pl. 97). As a piece of sculpture it has no importance. Its iconographic significance, however, must be noted. Iconographic texts require that the *Mātṛikās* should be flanked by Vīrabhadra and Gaṇeśa on the two sides. Here, both of them are seated together on one side, next to Chāmuṇḍā. The order of the Mātṛikās has also been changed. They are normally carved in this order: Brāhmī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaishṇavī, Vārāhī, Aindrī and Chāmuṇḍā. In this sculpture, the first Mātṛikā shown is Kaumārī. Her vehicle normally is *Mayūra*, but here, the *Kukkuṭa* or cock, which she is supposed to hold in one of her hands, becomes her vehicle. Next to her is Māheśvarī. Her vehicle Nandī is seen below her. The goddess seated next to her may be Brāhmī, the vehicle carved below her not being very distinct. It does not look like a goose as it ought to be. Actually, it is more like a cock. But she does hold an *utpala* in her right hand. It is possible, therefore, that she may be Brāhmī. The Mātṛikā next to her may be either Vaishṇavī or Kaumārī. The vehicle carved below is not very distinct but may be a *Mayura* or a *Garuḍa*. Next is Vārāhī. Her mount the boar is clearly carved. Next is Aindrī with an elephant below her seat. The vehicle of Chāmuṇḍā looks like a boar. She can, however, be recognized by her skeletal and ugly face. Next to her is Vīrabhadra, with his vehicle Nandī below. Next is Gaṇeśa, with his vehicle the rat underneath.

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These departures from iconographic requirements would suggest that this Mātṛikā slab was carved before iconographic traditions had become crystallised.

DURGA TEMPLE

The Durgā temple of Aihole has some of the best sculptures of the early Chālukya period. (Its whole frontage is artistically adorned with beautiful pieces, most of which are amorous couples.)

Pillar on Extreme Left of Facade

Amorous couples on pillars of porch

Sculpture facing east. An amorous couple is seen standing in a provocative posture (Pl. 98). The male and the female are closed in an embrace, the two hands of the lady encircling the neck of her spouse. Her right breast naturally rests on his chest. The male has responded by enclosing her with his left hand which goes round her body and is pressed against her back. Their legs are interlocked in a provocative manner. The lady is evidently very bold. She has thrust her right leg in between the legs of her spouse. The figures do not wear any ornaments, possibly because these would be a hindrance rather than a help.

Sculpture facing south. It is partially defaced. The lady of this panel has the face of a donkey (Pl. 99). She is, however, well-formed. In spite of her donkey face, the male is infatuated with her, which reminds one of the verse "*Prāptesu Shoḍashe varshe, gardabhī api apsarā bhavet*" (A girl of sixteen, even if she has a donkey face, looks beautiful like a celestial nymph).

Second Pillar from Left, Left of Entrance

Sculpture facing east. There is an interesting couple carved here. Obviously, the lady is taking the initiative, acting the Temptress (Pl. 100). One look at her would convince one that she is qualified to act the part. She has a full blooming figure with all the right curves. She stands resting on the left foot, with the body bent to the right in the middle, showing her body to the best advantage. The thin waist and the large posteriors form a beautiful curve. She looks a very determined person. With the right hand she holds the thick tuft of hair of the *Brahmachārin* who is seated kneeling on his left leg before her. Her right foot is folded and rests on the ground. His right hand shoots up, to save his tuft of hair from being cut off as the lady seems poised

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to do this with the sword in her left hand. She apparently means business. The *Brahmachārin* holds an *akshamālā* in the right hand, probably praying to God to save him since he cannot save himself.

Strange couple

Sculpture facing north. Here is a strange couple. A handsome young male is accompanied by a *kinnara* female, his entire body reclining on the latter for support. His right leg is destroyed below the knee. His left leg, which is lifted above the ground, is folded beautifully and rests on the female *kinnarī* on his left. His right hand is broken a little below the elbow. It probably rested on the head of the *kinnarī*. The leftward movement of the male is very attractive. The *kinnarī* is obviously strong since she successfully bears his weight. The horse-legs of the *kinnarī* are clearly shown. The male wears a beautiful *mukuṭa*, a pearl-*yajnopavīta* and the other usual ornaments.

Third Pillar from Left, Right Side of Entrance

Male figure

Sculpture facing south. It shows a very attractive figure of a male, who stands resting on a mace with his weight on the right foot and the left bent at the knee and taken behind the right leg (Pl. 101). The bend of the left leg and the swerving of the torso to the left makes support on the left absolutely necessary. This is provided by the mace on his left. This rests on the floor and sustains the weight of the figure. The various contours of the body easily melt into one another. The *tribhaṅga* position of the figure gives it a natural balance and poise. The slight inclination of the head to the right is enough to balance the leftward movement of the entire body. This gives it balance, dignity and grace.

In this sculpture, Chālukya plastic art is seen at its best. The figure is well-conceived and deftly executed. The various limbs of the body are finely shaped. The hands, the torso, the legs, look soft, the plastic planes melting beautifully and easily into one another. Chālukya art as seen in the Durgā temple is already well developed. It gives promise of greater things to come, and fulfils that promise. The handsome Chālukya face, the soft modelling of the body, the rich pearl-*yajnopavīta* and the graceful movements of the limbs make this sculpture extremely attractive, and one of the best here.

Amorous couples

Sculpture facing east. Here is a standing amorous couple. The male partner is obviously contented. He has placed his left hand on the shoulder of his spouse. His right hand and leg are broken. The right hand of the lady holds her tresses; her left hand is broken. Her right leg is erect while the left is bent at the knee and turned behind the right leg.

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Pillar on the Extreme Right

Sculpture facing east. Carved on the eastern face of the extreme left pillar of the facade, this amorous couple is in a sober posture. Unfortunately, the male companion is much damaged. He stands inclined on the left leg ; the right leg is broken. He has placed his left hand on the right shoulder of his spouse. It is not taken behind the neck but is folded to rest on her right shoulder. His right hand is held on his chest. His face is badly damaged. The lady stands very close to him, gracefully reclining on the right leg while the left leg is beautifully bent. Her right hand is placed on the left hand of her spouse while the left hand hangs down to rest on the lower garment.

Amorous couples

Sculpture facing north. It shows a happy amorous couple. The lady has placed her two hands round the neck of her spouse. As she looks up to him with love-filled eyes, she presses her body against his. The gentleman looks very happy and looks at her in a caressing manner. His right hand is placed on the head of a dwarf standing on his right, as if to retain his precarious balance.

Most sculptures are carved on the exterior side of the pillars of the porch and of the surrounding corridors.

Sculpture on Pillar, Left Side of the Porch (from the Visitor's Side)

Second pillar of the porch from the left side. This couple is more sober, but well carved. Unfortunately, the faces have become defaced. The male stands on the right, holding his spouse close to him. His left hand travels behind her back to reach her left shoulder. With this hand he has drawn her to him. She is obviously not unwilling as she reclines on him lightly by placing her right hand on his lower garment. The left hand is on the lap, holding a *kamaṇḍalu*. She stands gracefully with her right leg bent at the knee and taken behind her left leg.

Sculpture on the Third Pillar, Left Side of Porch

Sculpture facing east. This pillar shows a standing amorous couple on its eastern face. The female partner here is partially defaced (Pl. 102). She has placed her left hand round the shoulder of her spouse and is looking up at his face. Unfortunately, her face is defaced. Her right hand, which is partially damaged, is placed on his lower garment. Her spouse, who looks tall and imposing, has enclosed her with his right arm. He, however, seems to be a very restrained person. His left hand has come near her breasts, but does not touch them. His head is inclined to the right as he looks down with love-filled eyes at her. His

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ornate *mukuṭa*, pearl-*yajnopavīta* and short lower garment are worthy of notice. The lower garment of the lady is close-fitting and reaches a little above her knees.

Married couple

Sculpture facing south. Here is seen a married couple with a child (Pl. 103). The female stands resting on the right foot, with the left leg bent at the knee and turned to the right. She with her face turned to the left holds her child at her waist with the right hand, while her left supports the tiny right foot of the child. The latter is happily perched on the waist and has placed his tiny hand on his mother's breast. The male is looking at her in a caressing manner. His spouse looks up at him lovingly. The lady looks matronly. She is heavily built, has large firm breasts and sharp pretty features. Her lower garment resembles a half-pant.

Pillar on left (from where the corridor round the main hall and cella begins).

Siva

A damaged figure of Śiva is seen on this pillar, on its eastern face (Pl. 104). It is in a standing posture and is four-handed. Śiva stands on the prostrate figure of Apsamāra and though he stands erect, he yet retains dignity and grace.

Amorous couples

Sculpture facing south. This sculpture shows an amorous couple standing under a tree. It is very much defaced.

Second Pillar of the Corridor

Sculpture facing south. Here is seen an amorous couple under a tree. The female stands with her weight on the right foot, resting her left hand on the head of a dwarf—standing on the left. The sculpture is much defaced.

Second Outside Pillar of Porch on the Right Side

Sculpture facing north. It depicts an amorous couple standing under a tree. On the left is a dwarf.

Third pillar

An amorous couple is carved on this pillar, facing east. Unfortunately, it is very badly damaged. The male has his right hand upraised and in this he holds a shield. The left hand, which is thrown behind the back of his spouse, probably holds a sword. His right leg is lifted and bent at the knee in the *pratyālīḍha* posture. His spouse has entwined him wi h her right hand. Her left hand is broken. Both her legs are bent at the knee, the right being behind the left leg.

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Sculpture facing north. Here is an amorous couple standing under a tree. The female figure rests on her right foot with her left leg bent and her left hand resting on the head of a dwarf on her left.

There are a few other sculptures on this pillar but they are badly damaged.

Sculpture on First Pillar on the Right Side of Corridor

More amorous couples

Sculpture on east. This shows an amorous couple standing close to each other under a tree. The male leans on the trunk of a tree. Both his legs are slightly bent. He is handsome and of good proportions. Unfortunately, his right hand is completely destroyed. His left hand, however, is fruitfully engaged in embracing his charming beloved, who stands very gracefully reclining on a dwarf standing on her left. Her right leg is erect, while the left leg is bent at the knee and taken behind the other. Her right hand rests gracefully on her waist and the left on the head of the dwarf. Her head is beautifully inclined to the right. She also is well proportioned.

Sculpture facing north. This depicts an amorous couple standing under a banana tree. This sculpture is much damaged, but shows a tall male standing very gracefully leaning on the left leg while the right leg is beautifully thrust forward. His right hand is destroyed below the elbow, but the left is on the back of his spouse. His face is unfortunately damaged. Close to him stands his very graceful spouse, with her weight on the left leg. Her right hand is placed on the left leg of her spouse, which unfortunately is broken below the elbow. Her left hand is also broken below the elbow and her face is damaged. But in spite of its damaged condition the sculpture retains its inherent elegance.

Sculpture on the Second Pillar on the Right Side of Corridor

Sculpture facing north. This sculpture is damaged. The male stands leaning on the left leg with the right gracefully bent at the knee. His face and right hand are destroyed. His left hand is probably behind his spouse. His female companion is almost in a dancing posture. Her whole body is bent, as she bends at both the knees. Her right hand rests on the right lap ; the left hand is destroyed below the elbow. They both stand under the shade of a tree.

Sculptures on the Pillars of the Mukhamaṇḍapa

Mukha-mandapa

The *mukhamaṇḍapa* is entered through a flight of four steps. The roof of this *maṇḍapa* is supported by four huge pillars which are square in section and have two or four-sided capitals.

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100. Durgā temple. Couple on a pillar.
101. Durgā temple. Male figure on a pillar.

101

100

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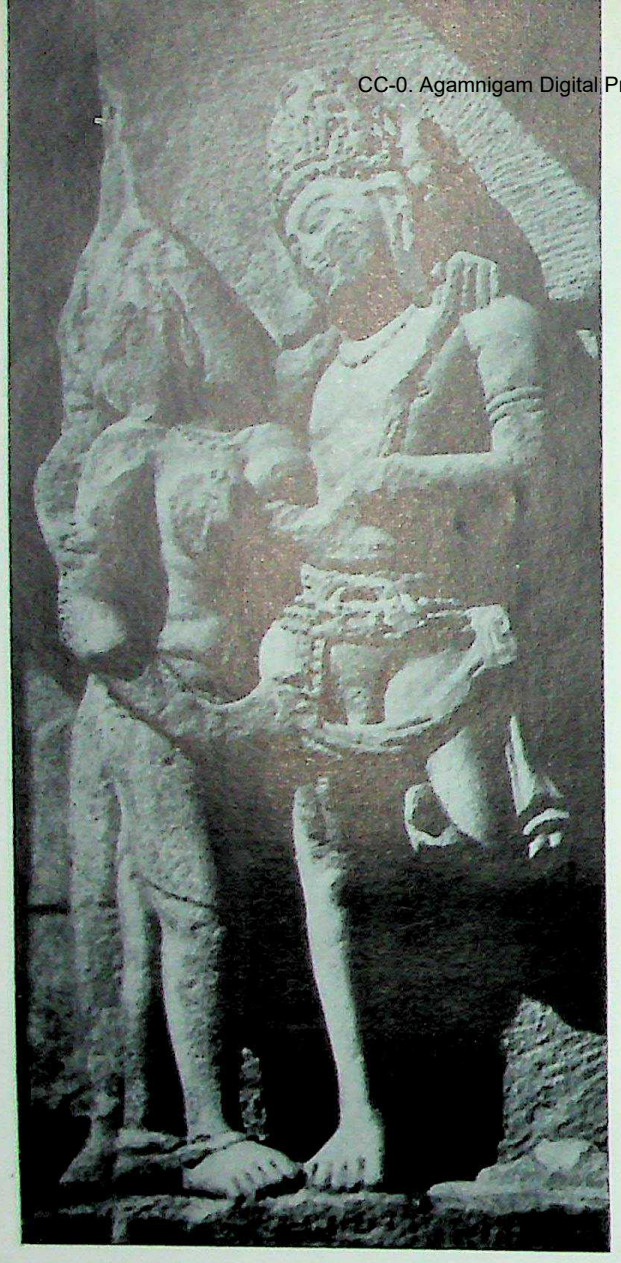

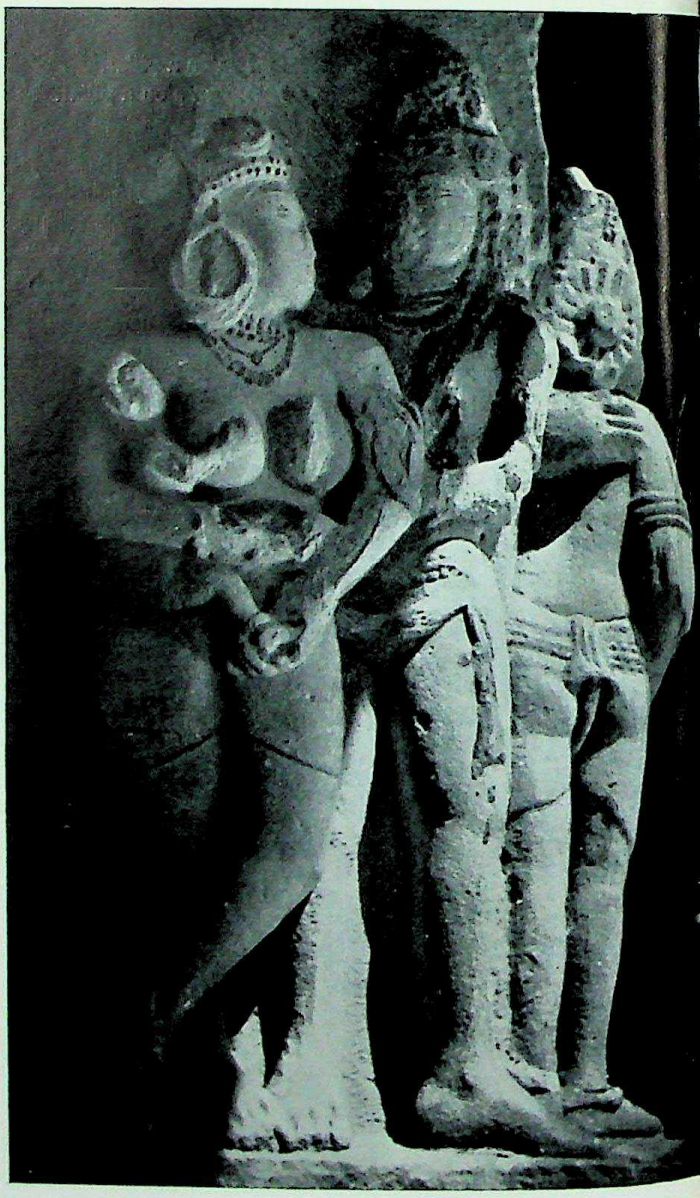

102. Durgā temple. Couple on a pillar.
103. Durgā temple. Couple on a pillar on left of the outer mukhamaṇḍapa, on its southern face.

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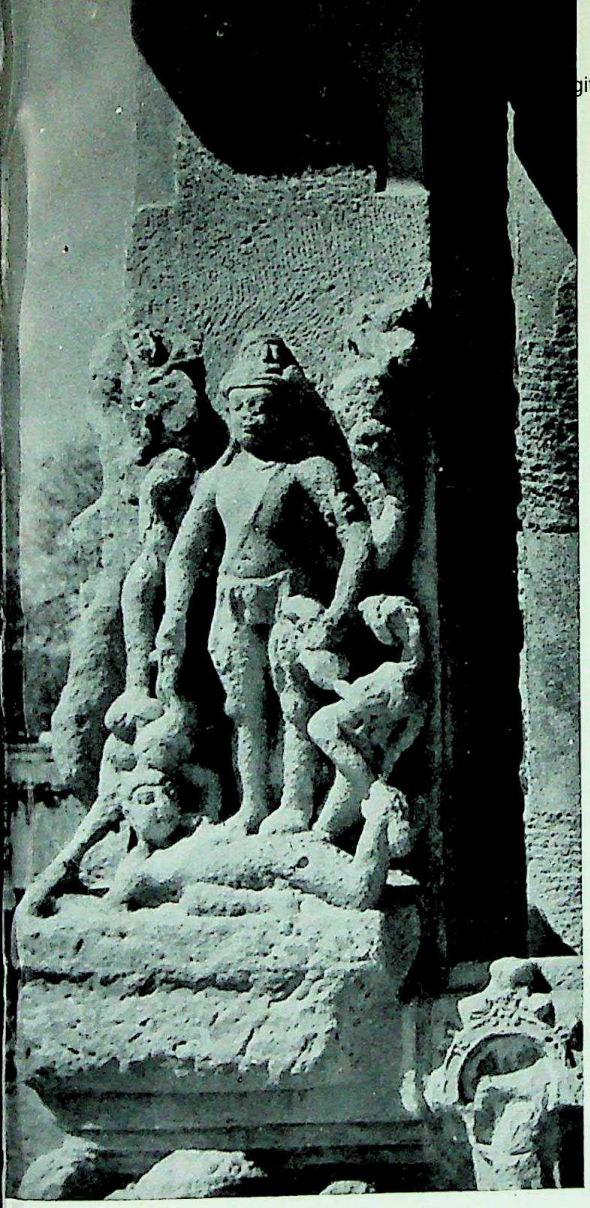
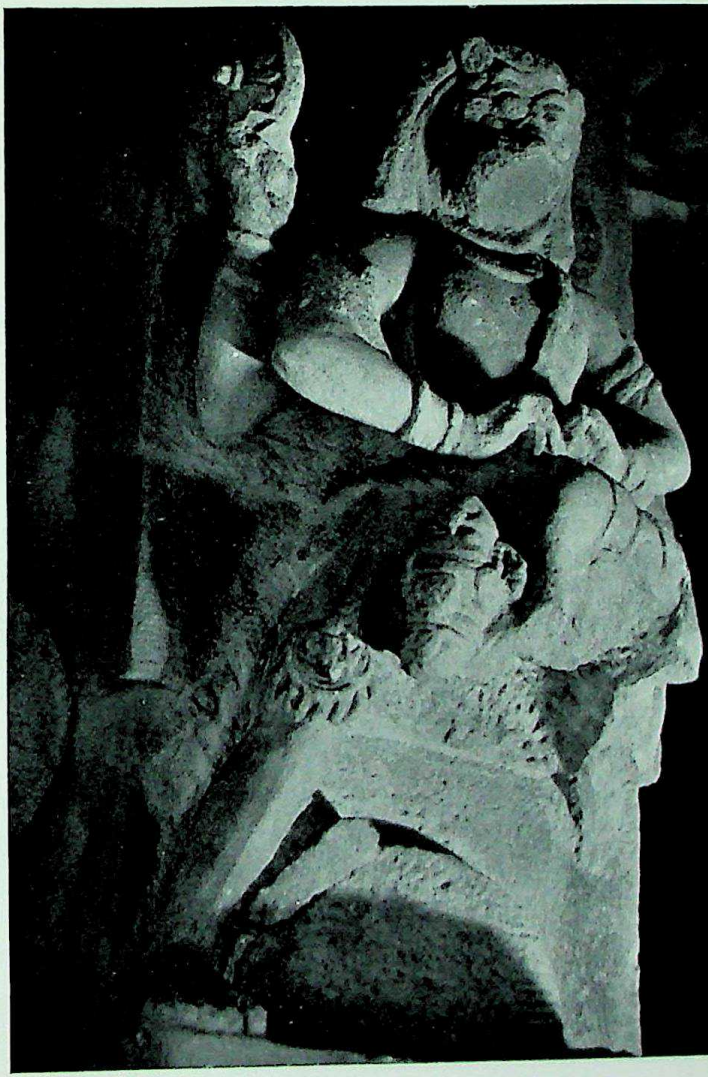
104. Durgā temple. Śiva on the first pillar of the left corridor on its eastern face.
105. Durgā temple. Nṛisiṁha on a pillar.



104



105

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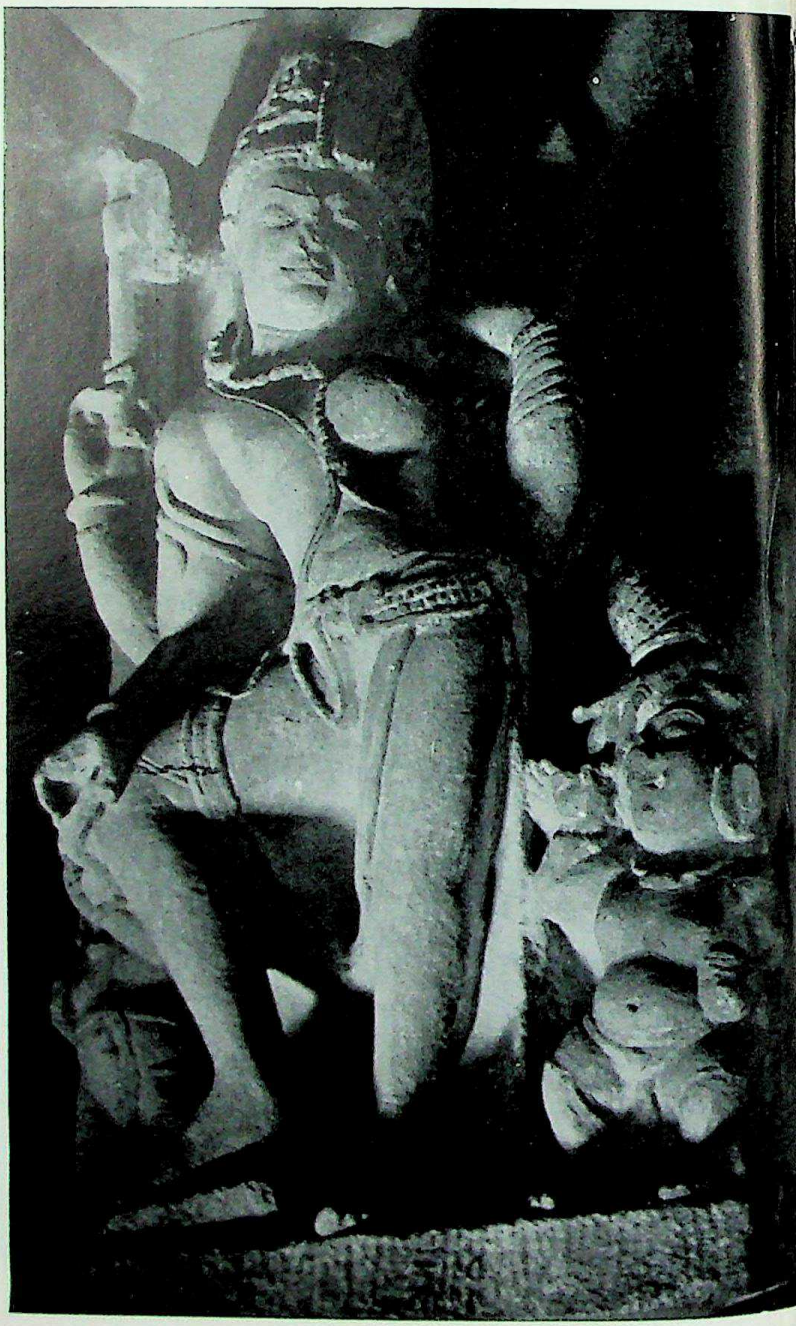
106. Durgā temple. Amorous couple on the front pillar on left of entrance to porch, facing south.



107. Durgā temple. Ardhanārīśvara on pillar at right of entrance, facing east.

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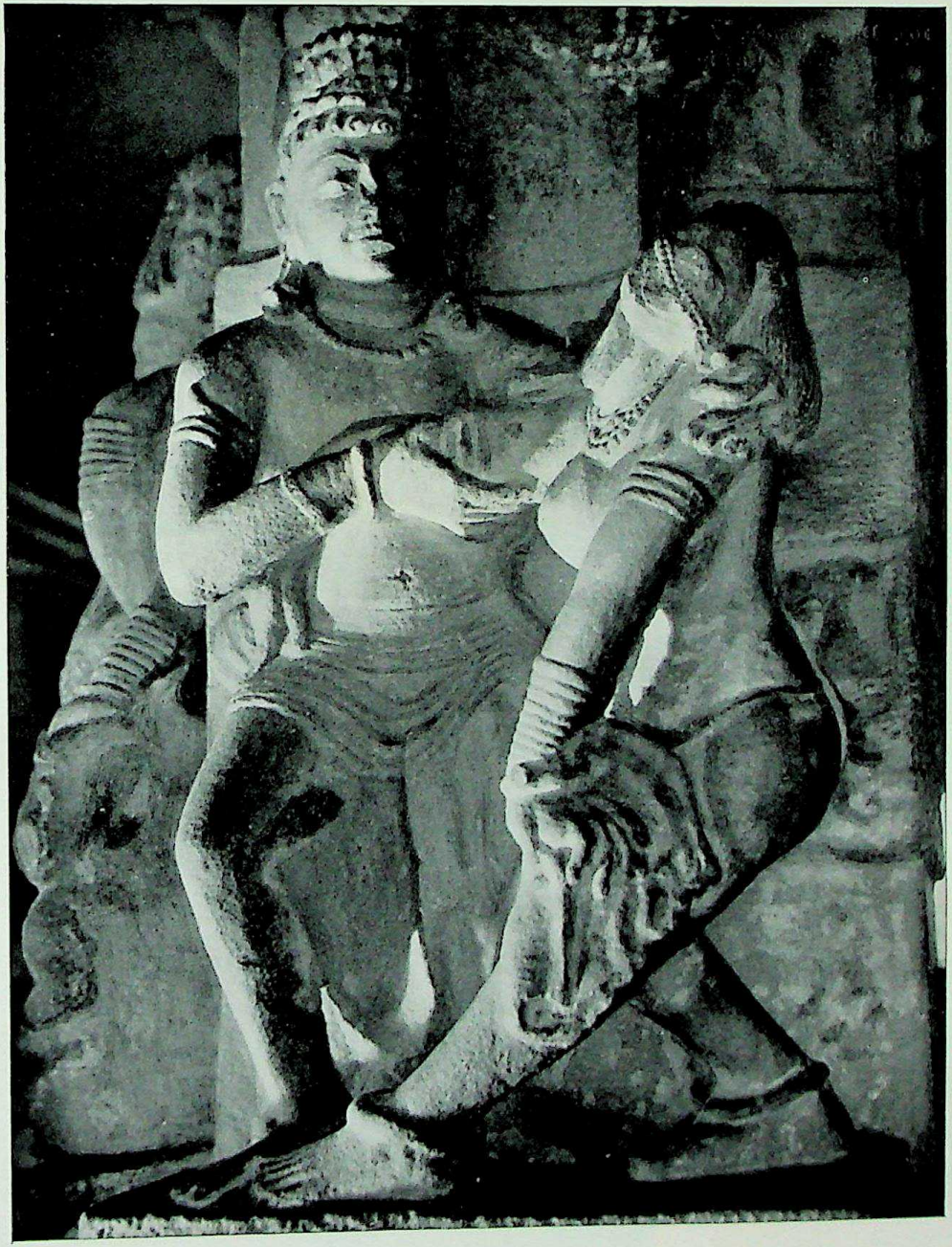
108. Durgā temple. A couple, probably in the course of a dance, on pillar at right of entrance, facing north.



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109. Durgā temple. Amorous group in a medallion on an inside pillar, on the western face.

110. Durgā temple. Details of a pillar inside, on the western face.

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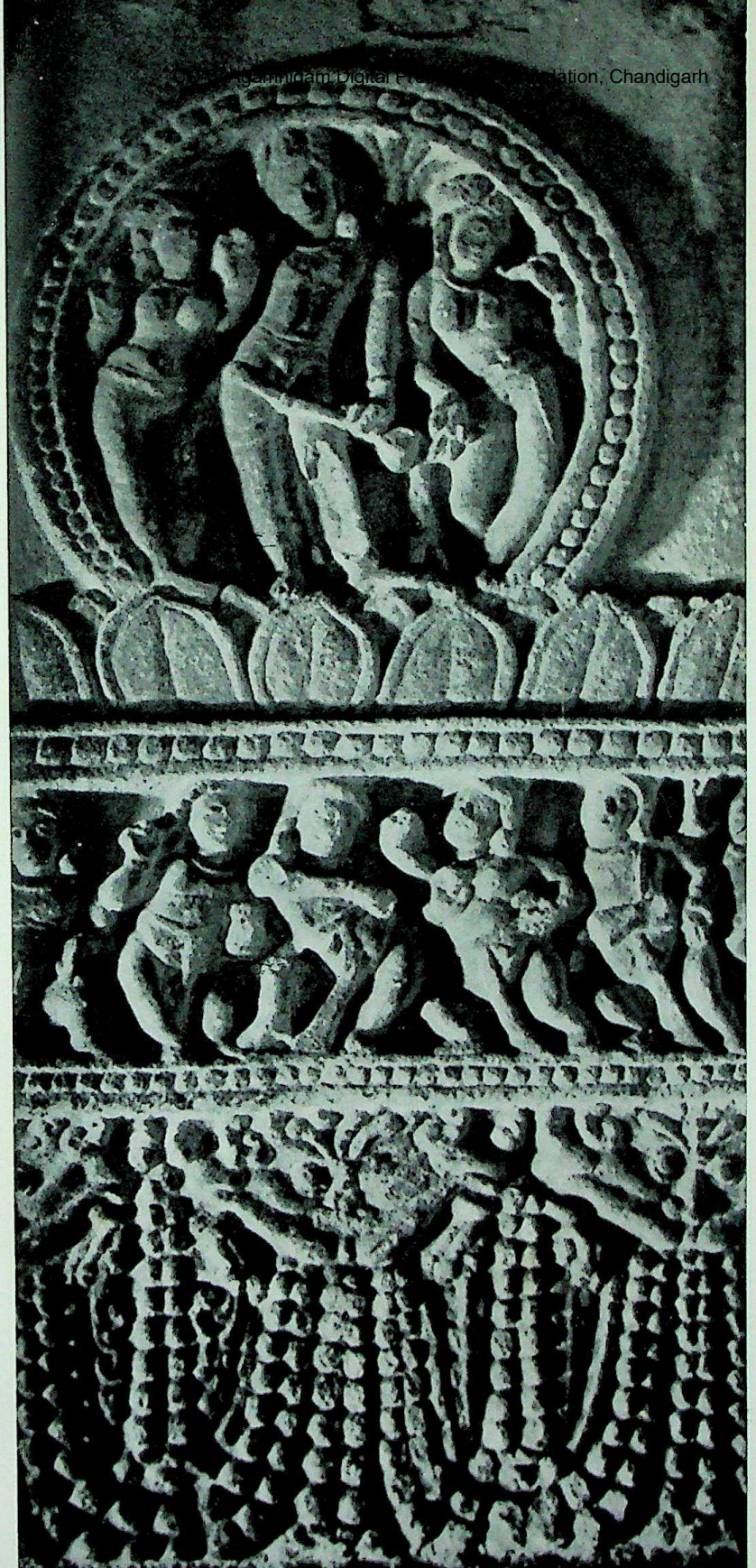

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111. Durgā temple. Flying couple in a medallion on the first right inside pillar.

111

112. Durgā temple. Amorous couple on a pillar in the mukhamaṇḍapa.

112

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Sculptures on Pillar on Left of Entrance to Porch

Sculpture of Nrisiṁha on the east. Nṛisiṁha stands on a pedestal, ripping open the belly of Hiraṇyakaśyapu with his two hands. This is a very striking and vigorous sculpture (Pl. 105). In one right hand he holds a *chakra*. The *śaṅkha* in his left hand is now destroyed. Hiraṇyakaśyapu lies helplessly on the left lap of the Man-Lion form of Vishṇu. He holds a shield in the left hand. The right hand along with the sword is now missing. His hands are thrown backwards helplessly. Nṛisiṁha shows great strength and vigour. **Nrisimha**

Sculpture facing south. On the southern face of this pillar is carved a very fascinating celestial couple, probably Śiva and Pārvatī. The lady is obviously drunk and, therefore, not able to support herself on her own two legs. Only the part of her body above the busts is intact (Pl. 106). But that little bit is enough to reveal the great artistic merit of this sculpture. Here the stone melts completely in the hands of the *takshaka* and becomes very pliable and expressive. It begins to speak as it were. Every limb of the body becomes charged with an emotion, expressive of a mood. Even the hand of the lady becomes expressive, looking absolutely helpless. The young gallant is obviously engaged in carrying his spouse back home. Her utter lack of control is expressed by the peculiar helpless position of her right hand and her extremely pretty face suggestive of her helplessness. As the ear-ring of the left ear rolls down on her beautiful face, one gets the feeling that her ornate *mukuṭa* might fall off any moment. The charming face shows a drunken smile. Her entire posture is utterly captivating. Drunkenness has obviously made her heavy. Though the handsome smiling face of her spouse does not show the amount of effort required to lift her up, the bent position of his two legs reveal the effort he has to make to support and carry her. He obviously seems happy to be carrying such an excitingly beautiful burden, as the charming smile on his handsome face reveals. In this sculpture, the Chālukya artist is seen at his best. **Celestial couple**

Pillar on Right of Entrance of Mukhamaṇḍapa

Sculpture facing east (*Ardhanārīśvara*). This sculpture of Ardhanārīśvara (Pl. 107) is in the best tradition of Chālukya art and can be compared to the Mahākūṭeśvara Ardhanārīśvara and the Ardhanārīśvara of Elephanta. It is classic in mould and utterly charming. It is three-dimensional, being almost in full relief. It has, therefore, a greater impact than the Mahākūṭeśvara Ardhanārī. Ardhanārī here is beautifully conceived and executed with caressing hands. Both the male (right half) **Ardhanarisvara**

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and female (left half) parts of Ardhanārī are conceived in classic proportions. The rightward inclination of the body with its *tribhaṅga* posture is extremely attractive. The right leg is lifted and placed on a pedestal in the *pratyālīdha* position. The *dhoti* of Śiva as the Male Principle is seen flowing down below from the male lap. In the upper right hand is held a *paraśu*. In the lower right hand, which rests on his right lap, is held a round flat object. This is also held by a *gaṇa*, who stands on the right.

The female part of Ardhanārī has typical feminine charm. Pārvatī who symbolises the Female Principle, looks fascinating. Every movement she makes is full of grace. She has placed one of her hands very gracefully on the left shoulder. The fingers of this hand are caressingly passed through the tresses of her hair, which fall beautifully on her own left shoulder. Her other hand travels below to rest on the head of a female dwarf standing on the side. Her charming smiling countenance, the firm provocative breast, the beautiful contour of her body, lend great beauty to this sculpture, the various planes of the body melting easily into one another. The ornate *mukuṭa*, the ear-ornament, the bangles, and the *sari*, emphasize the fact that the artist has not forgotten even these small details. It is obvious that the Chālukya artist had not much to learn. This sculpture is a triumph of Chālukya art and as far as figure sculpture was concerned, this art had now reached its zenith.

Dancing couple

Sculpture facing north. Another vigorous sculpture is carved on this pillar, on its southern face. It shows a couple probably engaged in a dance (Pl. 108). The male stands with his legs parted and bent at the knees, holding the out-stretched right hand of his young partner. His left hand closes round her neck and rests on her left shoulder. The fingers of this hand show delicate movement. As his legs part, the *dhoti* flows down in between the thighs. His posture gives the impression of his being engaged in a dance with his partner, his smiling countenance expressing his enjoyment. His *mukuṭa* is floral, being a lotus crown. The female of the couple is very interesting. She has her right leg bent at the knee as she moves forward. The left leg moves forward too to support the movement of the other leg. In the process of making this movement, she makes a very interesting angle. The linear movement of the body is fascinating. The *kachha* at the back makes another interesting curve. Her forward movement is supported by her hand which travels down below to rest on her left leg. The fingers of this hand are carved with great delicacy of feeling. The entire stance and posture of the lady is of fascinating interest. Her curvacious body seems full of graceful movements. This is a sculpture of great artistic merit.

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Friezes

Friezes on western face of the pillar. A number of interesting friezes are carved on this side of the pillar. Below is a band showing *gaṇas* in various postures. One of them has his hand upraised while some are shown dancing. Above this, inside a full medallion, is carved an amorous group (Pl. 109). Here the male is seen in the company of two females. He is in a flying posture. A lady is seated on his right leg with her left hand placed around his shoulder, while in the right she holds some objects. Her spouse is obviously in a very amorous mood. He has placed his right hand on her right shoulder, while his left is on her left breast. The other female, not wanting to be ignored, has seated herself on his left lap and placed her left hand on his chest in an effort to draw him to herself. Above this is carved a band showing beaded festoons issuing out of *simha-mukhas*. Above this again is another band showing *gaṇas* in various postures. Still above, inside a circle, is a male in the company of two young females. They are all beautifully carved. The young man stands gracefully in *dvibhaṅga*, with his right had in some *mudrā*. The left hand hangs loosely below to rest on his lower garment. The lady on his left stands in a beautiful dancing posture. The other lady on the right has partially reclined on the male (Pl. 110).

Ganas and amorous couples

Friezes carved on the south face of the pillar. Below on the shaft is a band of *gaṇas* in various dancing postures. A little distance above is carved a full circle with an amorous couple inside, the figures in a flying posture (Pl. 111). On the left is a male attendant. A little distance above, beaded festoons issue out of *simha-mukhas*. Above these is a beautiful band of *gaṇas* carrying musical instruments like a trumpet, cymbals, *dholaka*, a stringed instrument, etc. In a medallion above this is a standing amorous couple. They have obviously been drinking. The two cornucopias carved on the two sides above and the drunken condition of the lady are indicative of this. Attendants on the left of the lady and the right of the male hold wine-jars.

Second Pillar of Mukhamaṇḍapa on Right Side

Friezes facing east. Below on the shaft is a band of *gaṇas*, most of whom seem to be in a fighting mood. Above, inside a circle, is a flying couple. Higher up are festoons issuing out of *simha-mukhas*. Above this is another band of *gaṇas* in various postures. Two of them are seen beating a *dholaka*, while a central figure is dancing to the accompaniment of the music. On the right of this dancing figure is a *gaṇa* holding a pot in his left hand. A little distance above, inside a medallion, is a male standing in the company of two females, under a tree. The male stands

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gracefully with his weight on the right leg and with the right hand in the *abhaya mudrā*. The lady on his right also stands resting on her right leg, with her left hand resting on her left lap and her right hand held in a *mudrā*. The female on the left is in a dancing posture with both her legs bent at the knees. Her right hand, which is near her right leg, makes a dance *mudrā*, while her left hand is bent at the elbow, resting gracefully on her left shoulder.

Friezes facing south. Below, on the shaft is a frieze showing *gaṇas*. Two of them carry swords and shields and are apparently engaged in a fight. One carries a *kalaśa*, one is blowing a conch, while some are dancing. A little distance above, inside a medallion, is a flying couple (Pl. 113). A little further up are festoons issuing out of *siṁha-mukhas*. Above this is another band of *gaṇas*. Two of them have already come to blows. Another *gaṇa* holds an arrow. Three hold sticks in their hands. A short distance above this, inside a medallion, is an amorous group consisting of one male and two females. The male stands gracefully balanced on his left leg. With his left hand he has drawn his spouse close to himself, while his right hand rests on his waist. The lady has placed her right hand under his left hand to rest on his right shoulder. Her body is beautifully inclined, her left leg is straight, while the right is gracefully bent at the knee. She holds her left hand in some *mudrā*. The lady on the right stands in a dancing posture with her two hands upraised. The left hands makes a *mudrā*, while the right probably holds a *darpaṇa* (mirror).

Amorous couples

Sculpture facing north. The north face of the pillar shows a beautiful amorous couple in a kind of a dance pose (Pls. 112, 114) as indicated by their postures. The male has his legs parted, with the right bent and lifted in the *pratyālidha* position, while the left leg is straight. His left hand is on the back of his spouse, pressing her close to him while his right upraised hand carries a garland, which is obviously meant for her. His handsome face, with a fleeting smile, is turned to her and looks at her lovingly. His spouse has entwined him completely in a creeper-like embrace, with both her arms round him, her breasts pressed hard against him. Both her legs entwine his left leg. Her left leg is thrust straight forward, their thighs pressing against each other. Her right leg is bent at the knee and also thrust forward, the left leg of the male interlocked between her two thighs. As she entwines her spouse thus, she happily reclines her beautiful head on his shoulder, near the neck. The *kachha* of her lower garment, which is seen at the back, curves up in a serpentine fashion. Her hair-dress is striking. Their faces have been chiselled

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with care. The long pointed eyebrows, the sharp faces and full lips have all been modelled perfectly.

Second Pillar on Left Side of the Mukhamaṇḍapa

Sculpture facing south. This amorous couple appears very sober. It is unfortunate that the head of the lady is now completely destroyed, as also her right leg. She seems rather heavily built and stands resting on her right foot. The left leg is bent at the knee and taken behind the right leg. Her full breasts and the prominent nipples attract immediate attention. Her spouse stands on her left almost erect. His right hand is behind her back, while the left holds the hand of his spouse in the front very delicately. His handsome smiling countenance reveals his happiness. He wears an ornate crown, a pearl-*yajnopavīta* and the other usual ornaments. His lower garment is tied in a beautiful knot on the left. His left leg is now destroyed.

Friezes of ganas and couples

Friezes facing east. On the shaft below is a frieze of *gaṇas* in various postures (Pl. 115). A little distance above, inside a medallion, is a flying couple. The male holds a sword in his right hand and a shield in his left. A little distance above are seen beaded festoons issuing out of lion-mouths. The frieze of *gaṇas* above these depict them shouting, dancing, fighting. In a medallion, a little distance above is an amorous group consisting of one male and two females. The male here seems to be standing in a dancing posture. Both his legs are bent at the knees. With the left arm he embraces the lady on his left. She has her right hand upraised, while the left is seen resting on some object on the left. The lady on his right does not seem to be happy about this. Her left leg is meaningfully bent at the ankle to show her displeasure. Her right hand rests on her lower garment, while the left is bent at the elbow and reaches up to touch her left earring.

Friezes facing north. Below on the shaft can be seen a band of *gaṇas*. Above, inside a medallion, is a flying couple in an amorous posture.

Friezes facing west. On the shaft below is a *gaṇa*-frieze. Some of these are shown fighting. In a medallion above is an amorous couple, in a very close and intimate embrace (Pl. 116).

Decorative Ceiling Slabs of the Mukhamaṇḍapa

Fishes and Naga

On one huge stone ceiling slab of the *mukhamaṇḍapa* are carved two circles, one inside the other. The inner circle shows fishes forming the spokes of the central wheel. In between the two circles is a floral design.

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In a rectangular slab on the ceiling is carved a beautiful sculpture of a seven-hooded *Nāga* in the company of four *Nāgiṇis* ; but the two on his left are now destroyed. All the three of them are delicately carved. The *Nāga* carries a garland in the right hand and a bouquet in the left.

Sculptures of Corridor

Sculptures in niches

Some of the noblest examples of Chālukya sculptures, however, are those which are placed in beautifully carved niches in the corridor that runs round the entire temple. Some of these niches have no sculptures. This would mean either that the sculptures were never placed in these niches or that they have since been removed from there.

Vrishabha-vahana-Siva

In these sculptures at Durgā, Chālukya plastic idiom reaches its highest pinnacle. The sculpture of Vṛishabhavāhana-Śiva is classic in conception and reveals a technical perfection in execution (Pl. 117). The slender and sensitive treatment of the body, its stance and grace, is endowed with an inner spiritual experience. Śiva stands gracefully reclined on his vehicle Bull, with his weight on the right foot, and the left bent at the knee. The right leg swerves beautifully to the right from the waist. This rightward movement of the body is balanced by a leftward movement made as he rests the elbow of one left hand on the back of the standing Nandī. One right hand is raised gracefully upward. It is balanced by one left hand which descends to caress the left ear of the Bull. The disposition of the eight hands is strikingly graceful and harmonious. The body bends beautifully in the *dvibhaṅga* as the right leg is moved delicately to the right, to be balanced by the upper part of the body that leans to the left. The left leg, which lightly rests on the ground (it is unfortunately broken below the knee) gives balance to the body. The *dvibhaṅga* position of Śiva breaks the line of the body on its own axis, resulting in a graceful and relaxed attitude, and lends the form litheness and movement. As the contours of the body melt into one another, the sculpture acquires an easy and reposeful attitude born of an inner spiritual experience. The handsome face of Śiva expresses his inward bliss. The beautiful fleeting smile on the slightly bent face expresses utter peace and contentment. The long and sharp bow-like eyebrows, the fish-shaped eyes, which seem to look inward in contemplation, the small but sharp nose, the sensuous lips and the roundish face, all reveal calm contemplation and repose. Other minor details may be noticed. The *jaṭāmukuṭa* is extremely decorative and shows the Moon. The *maṇi-yajnopavīta* is longish and is extremely well carved. The *maṇi-mekhalā* looks very rich and has a central diamond clasp. A

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Vyāghra-chāmara covers his right thigh. One left hand of Śiva rests on the hump of Nandī. A *gaṇa* of Śiva is seen on the right playing with the tail of the Bull.

Vishnu on Garuda

Another striking sculpture here is that of Vishṇu seated on the man-Garuḍa (Pls. 118, 119). It has obviously been executed by the same artist as the one who carved the sculpture just described. This Vishṇu looks like Śiva described above, but in another posture. It shows the same delicacy and refinement of form and the same relaxed attitude in respect of stance. The smiling face is expressive of great spiritual joy ; the expression on the face is utterly sweet and captivating. The smooth and luminous body seems to be weightless, breathing the enjoyment of supreme bliss. The legs of Vishṇu are parted as he gets ready to sit on the man-Eagle. His right leg is bent at the knee slightly ; his left leg is bent more sharply. Unfortunately, this leg is broken from the knee down. His upper right hand, which is broken from the elbow, carries a Wheel, while the lower right hand is very gracefully held in the boon-giving attitude. His upper left hand, which is broken above the elbow, holds a conch, while the lower left hand travels below to rest on the left thigh. He wears an ornate crown, a *maṇi-yajnopavīta* and the other usual ornaments. Below him is seen the man-Eagle with the wings spread. On the right side is a small figure of Lakshmī, standing gracefully resting on the right foot. Her great beauty lies in the shapely proportions of her figure, the beautiful fleeting smile on her face attracting immediate attention. She wears an ornate floral *mukuṭa*, rich earrings and the usual ornaments.

Nrisimha

In a niche in between Śiva and Vishṇu is a sculpture of Nṛisiṁha, the man-lion (Pl. 120), but this sculpture is not such as can inspire much admiration. Here, the artist has succeeded in giving dignity to the person of Nṛisiṁha, who is shown standing majestically with his weight on his left foot. The torso of the man-lion makes a beautiful rightward swerve, the movement to the right being balanced very delicately by the leftward movement of the left hand resting gracefully a little below the waist. One right hand was probably held in a *mudrā*. It is now destroyed. The other right hand is also partially destroyed along with the object in that hand. The upper left hand holds a conch. The lion countenance of Nṛisiṁha is forbidding in appearance.

Vishnu as Varaha

In another niche is carved Vishṇu as Varāha, the man-boar, standing in the *ālīdhāsana* (Pl. 121). Along with the forward movement of the

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lower body, the torso moves in the same direction. The upper right hand is flung forward to support Vasundharā (the goddess Earth), who is comfortably seated on it. The boar face also is thrust upward and touches the left hand of the goddess. The forward movement of the body is balanced by the movement of the right hands in the opposite direction. The lower right hand is bent at the elbow and then rests on the right thigh, the other right hand holding a Wheel which touches the crown. The left leg is placed on the coils of a three-hooded *Nāga*, who is obviously supplicating him, lying down meekly below in an attitude of adoration. A three-hooded *Nāgiṇi* is seen next to him. The figure of Vasundharā, who is shown seated on the upper left hand, is beautifully carved. She has an attractive figure. In the same hand Varāha also carries a conch.

Harihara

The sculpture of Harihara in the same corridor obviously belongs to another tradition. It has little artistic merit (Pl. 122). Harihara is shortish and stocky. His face shows no expression. Though his eight hands look natural, the disposition of the hands is unattractive. The erect position in which he is made to stand is not likely to lend it any charm. The entire composition is very earthly and heavy, reminiscent of Rāshtrakuṭa art. But that art is at least very expressive. Here, even that cannot be said. The right side is Śiva. All the hands of Śiva are broken, along with the objects held in them. The *jaṭāmukuṭa* of Śiva is on the right while the left side shows a *kirīṭa-mukuṭa*. In the upper left hand is shown a Wheel. The next holds a bow. With one left hand Vishṇu caresses Lakshmī, who is standing on the left. The fourth left hand rests a little below the waist holding a conch. On two sides above are seen beautiful female flying figures. On the right side of Harihara is the graceful figure of a *gaṇa* holding a cornucopia in front. On the left is a beautiful sculpture of Lakshmī, standing inclined on the right leg.

Mahishasur-mardini

The sculpture of Mahishāsurmardinī, which is almost in full relief, has been executed in the classic tradition. (Pl. 123). Despite the eight hands, Durgā retains her grace. The struggle with the demon Mahishā has not disturbed her stance and poise, which remains statuesque in its own inherent dignity. Durgā stands with her legs parted. Her right leg is thrust to the right, while the left is lifted to rest on the back of the Buffalo-demon, pressing him down into a sitting position, as she effortlessly drives her javelin into his back. The task of destruction is accomplished with ease. The face does not show any anger or hatred, but only great peace and contentment. The relaxed attitude of the body, the

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easy disposition of the hands, and the beautiful face with the downcast eyes are all expressive of supreme bliss. Durgā looks the personification of confidence as she attacks the demon. She is confident of her own power, which is the power of Virtue, Divinity and Goodness. In the struggle between Good and Evil, Good always triumphs (as we innocently like to believe). She is aware of this. Durgā is shown as a young lady blooming with youth. As a matter of fact, it was this great beauty of Pārvatī which had made Mahishāsura cast evil eyes upon her. The artist has succeeded in giving Pārvatī a most bewitching form. Her limbs are well formed, her breasts are full, round and firm. The waist is small; the curve from here becomes expansive as it travels downward, growing in size towards the posteriors. Her legs are finely shaped.

RAVANA-PHADI

The Nidhis

On the facade of the Hindu rock-cut temple of Rāvana-Phadi are carved the two *Nidhis*, Śaṅkha and Padma. Both of them are seated inside niches which have *adhisthāna*. Śaṅkha Nidhi is on the right of the entrance, seated with both feet bent at the knees, his huge belly weighing down upon them. In his right hand he holds a conch, while the left rests on his spacious abdomen, holding an object that is not recognizable. He is reclined happily on a big cushion. Padma Nidhi is seated more comfortably with the feet crossed. His spacious belly also weighs down upon his legs. He holds a lotus in his left hand, while the right rests on his belly.

Ardhanarisvara

Inside the veranda-like hall, on the left of the entrance, is the sculpture of Ardhanārīśvara, standing on a lion-pedestal (Pl. 124). As in all such sculptures, the right half is male and the left half female. Ardhanārīśvara is two-handed, the right hand near the knee of the bent right leg holding the *triśūla* and the left engaged in caressing the tresses that flow down through the *mukuṭa*. The *tribhaṅga* posture of the figure gives it great charm. The right leg is lifted to rest on the toe. The stance and posture of Ardhanārīśvara are very attractive, showing a rhythmic movement that attracts immediate attention and reminds one of the Ardhanārīśvara of Mahākuṭeśvara. The left foot is adorned with a very decorative anklet. The lower garment of Śiva as Śakti or Nārī is more elaborate than the lower garment of Śiva as the passive Male

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Principle. The oval face with the sharp bow-shaped eyebrows and elongated eyes is attractive. The figure is well proportioned, the legs are finely shaped, the breast is life-size and not exaggerated. The *mukuṭa*, however, is very high. A *gaṇa* is seen near the right of Ardhanārīśvara.

Gangadhara-Siva-Murti

Śiva stands erect, with a smiling countenance (Pl. 125), but this erect posture does not give the sculpture life and vitality. This is a posture more of *Kāyotsarga* than of anything else, creating an atmosphere of immobility that even the smiling countenance cannot destroy. His right hand is folded and reaches up to his shoulder, where it makes a *mudrā*. The left hand comes down below to rest a little below the waist, on the left thigh. Three-eyed Gaṅgādhara-Śiva has a full oval face, with sharp eyebrows. His hair flows down from inside the *jaṭāmukuṭa*. He wears a *phalaka-hāra* and a very rich multiple-stringed pearl-*yajnopavīta* as well as the other usual ornaments. His lower garment reaches to the knees, held in position by a three-stringed pearl *kamarapattā* with a knot at the centre. The folds of his lower garment can be seen below on the two sides. On the left of Gaṅgādhaṛa-Śiva is a standing figure of Pārvatī. She stands gracefully resting on her right foot, her right hand lifted up and placed lightly on her rich necklace. The left hangs loosely by the side, lightly holding the *maṇi-mekhalā* that falls on her left thigh. She has full breasts, a small waist with three folds, and expansive posteriors. Her *sari*, which reaches to a little above her knees, shows slanting folds. In her high *mukuṭa* can be seen a *Chandra*. Her two arms are covered with bangles and she wears broad winding anklets. On the right of Gaṇgādhara-Śiva can be seen either Bhṛiṅgī-Ṛishi or more probably Bhagīratha practising penance. His body is skeletal. He stands on his left leg, with the right upraised. His two hands are also upraised. He has a long beard and wears a high *jatāmukuṭa*. Right on top of Śiva's high *mukuṭa* can be seen three river goddesses, all in the *namaskāra mudrā*. This is surprising from the point of view of iconography. It is obvious that at this time the iconography of Gaṅgādhara-Śiva had not been standardised. The Chālukya sculptor, in a generous mood, carved the three sacred river goddesses Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī. River-goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā were already popular with the Chālukya artists of Aihole and they commonly appear on shrine doors and entrance gateways (Pl. 126, Halibasappa temple, Aihole). Some Chālukya sculptor must have got the brilliant idea of carving all the river-goddesses of Āryāvarta instead of showing just one. If all the river-goddesses were sacred, why should they not be received by Śiva,

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113. Durgā temple. Couple in a medallion on the second right inside pillar.

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114

114. Durgā temple. Amorous couple.
115. Durgā temple. Warrior with sword and female companion, in a medallion on an inside pillar.

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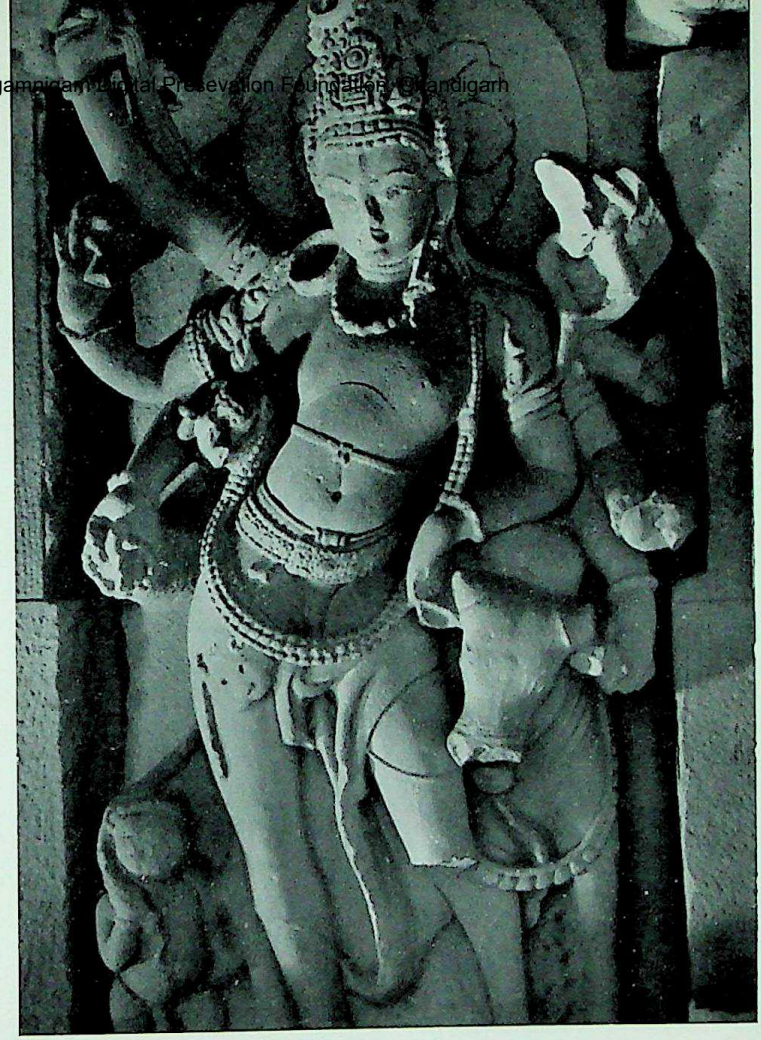

117. Durgā temple. Vṛishabhavāhana-Śiva-Mūrti.

116. Durgā temple. Amorous couple in a medallion on an inside pillar.

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120. Durgā temple. Nṛisimha Avatar of Vishnu.
121. Durgā temple. Varāha Avatar of Vishnu.

121

18. Durgā temple. Vishnu.
19. Durgā temple. Close-up of the head of Vishnu of preceding plate.

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122 123

122. Durgā temple. Harihara.
123. Durgā temple. Mahishāsurmardini.

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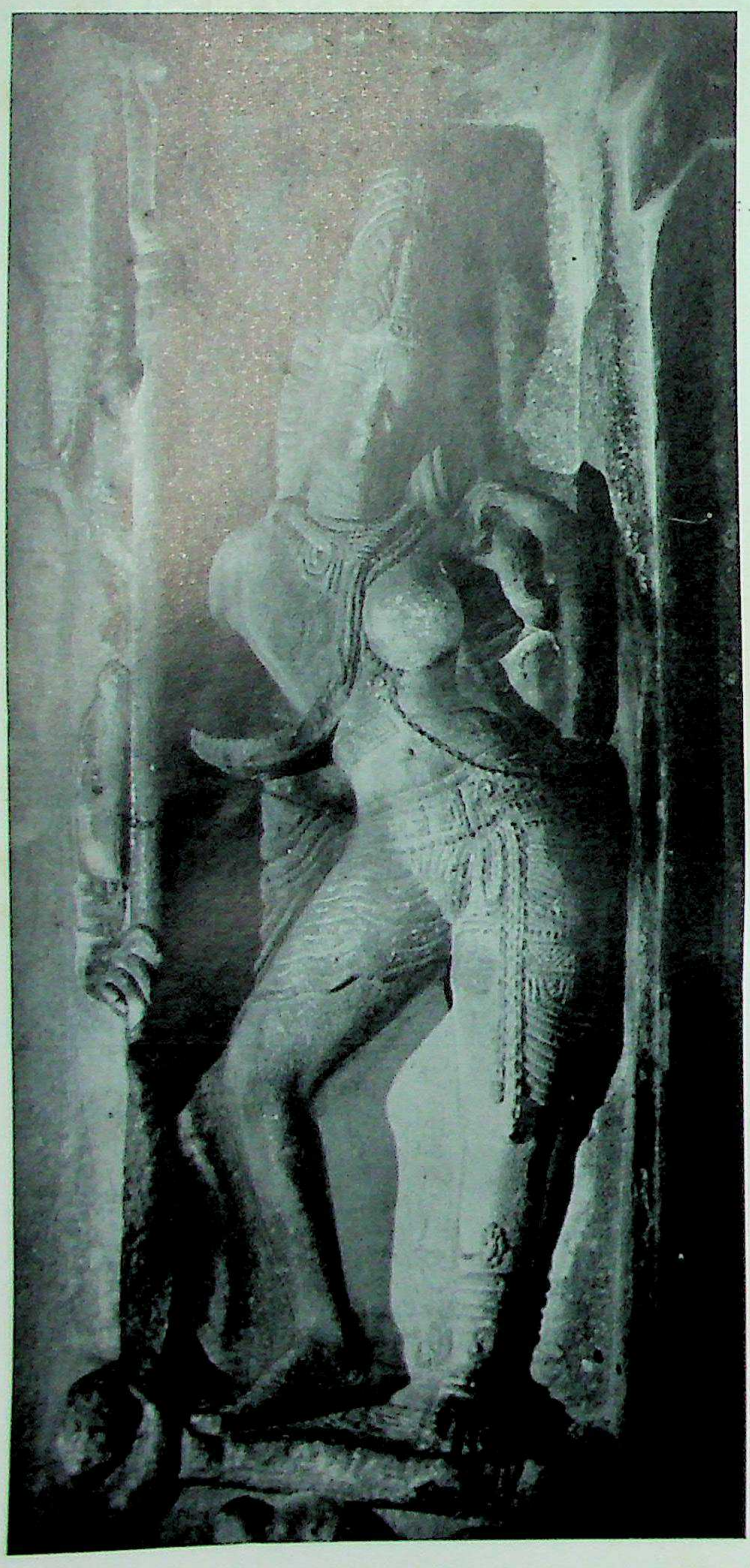

124. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Ardhanārīśvara.

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who so willingly agreed to receive Gaṅgā in his *jaṭā* at the behest of Bhagīratha ? In this respect, therefore, this is a unique panel.

Bhringi and gana

Below the pedestal of Gaṅgādhara-Śiva is the sage Bhṛiṅgī, seated kneeling in the *namaskāra mudrā* and holding an *akshamālā* in the right hand. Next to him is a pot-bellied *gaṇa* holding a long cobra in his two hands. Next to him is a figure holding a *triśūla* in the right hand and a bell (*ghaṇṭā*) in the left. He seems to recline heavily on the *triśūla*. A smiling *gaṇa* is seen seated happily on a stool.

Siva

On the left back wall of the hall is a standing figure of Śiva resting on the right foot, and holding a huge long *triśūla* in the right hand, with a long *aṅkuśa* near the left (Pl. 127). The left hand is bent gracefully to rest a little below the waist. Śiva stands in graceful dignity, guarding the shrine. He is adorned with a many-stringed pearl-*yajnopavīta*, a rich necklace, ear-rings, etc. His lower garment hangs in slanting folds and is held in position by a pearl *kamarapaṭṭā*. A very long *maṇi-mekhalā* hangs below from the waist, caressingly touching his two feet and curling up from his right foot.

Siva and Harihara

On the right back wall of the hall are Śiva and Harihara (Pl. 128). The former is on the right, standing slightly balanced on the right leg. The right hand holds an *aṅkuśa* or a *triśūla*, which rests on the floor below. The object in the left hand is not very clear, but reveals a fly-whisk and a cobra. The hand itself rests on the waist. The lower garment reaches to a little above the knees and shows slanting folds. His pearl-*yajnopavīta* looks very rich. He is very heavily ornamented, wearing a long chain-necklace that reaches from the shoulders to the feet. His ornamental *mukuṭa* shows a human skull. Though Śiva here expresses no movement, he has dignity.

Next to him is Harihara, standing quite erect. The right half of him is Hara or Śiva, and the left is Hari or Vishṇu. This is in accordance with iconographic requirements. In the upper right hand he holds a cobra, while in the lower right hand he holds an *akshamālā* near his chest. In the upper left hand he carries a conch, while the lower left rests on the waist. The right side *mukuṭa* is a *jaṭāmukuta*, while the left side *mukuṭā* is a *kirītamukuṭa*. His pearl-*yajnopavīta* is rich as also are his other ornaments. The lower garment has slanting folds. The disposition of the four hands is natural and Harihara has a dignified appearance. Below these sculptures on the pedestal are four *gaṇa*-musicians. One blows a conch, another plays upon a *dholaka* (a kind of drum), and two upon stringed instruments.

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Dancing Siva with the Saptamatrikas and Parvati

In the left side chamber of the hall, on the back, left and right walls, is carved a panel of dancing Śiva accompanied by Pārvatī and the Saptamātṛikās. They are all shown standing. Three mātṛikās are carved on the left wall (Pl. 129). The one on the extreme left is Brāhmī. She is easily recognised by her three heads, the *kamaṇḍalu* she holds in the left hand, which rests on the right thigh, and the *akshamālā* she has in the right hand, which crosses the left near the waist and hangs below. The right hand separates the two breasts in a rather awkward manner. The nipples of the breast are very prominently carved, probably to emphasise her Motherhood. She wears a *kaṇṭhā*, two rich necklaces, armlets and many bangles. Her *sari* has slanting folds, and reveals the shape of her legs. The folds of the *kachchha* are vertical, the latter making the garment close-fitting. No upper garment can be seen. She wears a very high *kirītamukuṭa*. The body is fairly well-proportioned, and seems weightless. It is, however, weighed down by the huge elongated *mukuṭa*. Her vehicle is not shown. Next to her is Māhesvarī. She can be recognised by the moon in her elongated *mukuṭa* and by the third eye which is just above the bridge of the nose. Her left hand is in some *mudrā*, while the right is taken to the left and rests there to support the elbow of the left hand. She wears a rich pearl-necklace and a *stanahāra* with the pendant hanging a little below her two breasts. Her *sari* shows horizontal but slanting folds. It reaches down to the ankles and is close-fitting and has a *kachchha* at the centre. The figure lacks grace or poise. The elongated *mukuṭa* appears too heavy.

Vaishnavi

Vaishṇavī, who is seen next to her, stands more relaxed. She is heavily inclined to the left, her entire body swerving leftwards. The left leg is bent at the knee and rests on the wall nearby. The torso above also swerves to the left and is supported on the left hand, which is bent at the elbow to rest on the wall to its left. The left hand rests on the left thigh. The leftward swerve of the body is thus counter-balanced by the left leg and the left hand. Her right hand is raised a little above the breast, the palm of this hand resting on the rich necklace. The *stanahāra* descends from the neck, travels in between the breasts and has a pendant below. Two strings of the breast-necklace travels to the back of Vaishṇavī to go up to the neck at the back. The high *kirīṭamukuṭa* she wears suggests her identity. Her *sari* differs from those of the first two Mātrikās as it reaches only upto the knees. It shows horizontally slanting folds.

Kaumari

Next to her, on the back wall, is probably Kaumārī, standing in a beautiful dancing pose (Pl. 130). This is not surprising since she is

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shown standing close to the dancing Śiva. She is obviously trying to imitate him. She has moved her right leg gracefully to the right to take a dancing step, the leg bent at the knee to rest on the toe. The right hand above makes a balanced rightward movement and comes down to rest on her right thigh. In the process of this rightward movement, the body swerves to the right from the waist downwards. The left leg is bent at the knee to support this movement of the body. This rightward movement of the body is further balanced by the tilting of the head to the left. This gives the figure poise and stability and makes the entire posture attractive. The *mudrā* made by the left hand is in keeping with her dancing posture. It looks like the *kaṭaka-simhakarṇa mudrā*; the thumb and the folded index finger touch each other, while the middle and the ring finger are folded to touch the palm of the hand. The little finger is now broken. She wears two necklaces, a *stanahāra*, etc. In between Vaishṇavī and Kaumārī is the skeletal figure of Bhṛiṅgī or Kāla dancing in mid-air.

Ganesa

Next to Kaumārī is a two-handed standing figure of Gaṇeśa (Pl. 131). His right hand rests on the belly holding a purse-like object. His left hand also rests near his belly holding a *droṇa-pātra* containing *laḍḍus*. His trunk is thrust to the left and is actively engaged in picking up *laḍḍus* from the *droṇa-pātra*. He wears a necklace, a *maṇi-yajno-pavīta*, etc.

Siva

In the centre of the back wall is a magnificent sculpture of Śiva in a dancing pose (Pl. 132) but he does not answer to any of the known descriptions of *Nrityamūrtis* as he is ten-handed. In his upper right and left hands he holds a cobra, where he normally should hold a *gaja-chāmara*. The second right hand holds a *ghaṇṭā*, the third a *paraśu*; the fourth is partially broken; the fifth is in what looks like the teaching attitude. In this *mudrā*, the index finger is folded to touch the tip of the thumb, the other three fingers being kept open. A left hand is also in the same *mudrā*. In one left hand he holds a pair of rims (*chipalyā*), the fourth left hand is again in some *mudrā*, while the fifth left hand rests on the thigh of the left leg. A cobra glides down from Śiva's left shoulder to curve round his right arm and then proudly opens his cobra-hood. The *jaṭāmukuṭa* of Śiva is very ornate and has a moon carved on it. His lower garment reaches to his knees and shows horizontal folds. This is a beautiful sculpture full of force and movement, the various limbs of the body moving with a fluid grace. The disposition of the hands looks natural.

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Skanda Next to the dancing Śiva is a small standing figure of Skanda. His right hand rests near the waist holding a cobra. The left hand also rests on the waist. His head is unfortunately destroyed.

Parvati Next to Skanda is a standing figure of Pārvatī (Pl. 133). She does not seem to be present here as one of the Mātṛikās. That position is already occupied by Maheśvarī. The artist has, however, taken care to distinguish her from the Mātṛikās in a very subtle manner. This has been done by clothing Pārvatī in a distinguishable *sari*, differing from the *saris* worn by the other Mātṛikās. Whereas the *saris* of the latter are very close-fitting and reach only upto the knees, that of Pārvatī descends to her ankles and is far more attractive, falling into beautiful slanting folds. However, the *kachchha*, which flows in between her legs, shows vertical folds. She stands balanced on her right foot, with the left leg bent at the knee and moved slightly backward. This movement lends charm to her figure, slightly inclining her torso to the left. The left hand also makes a slight detour to the left. This movement of the body is balanced by the delicate slant of the right hand that rests caressingly on the right shoulder. Pārvatī is rather heavily but charmingly built. In her *mukuṭa* is a *Chandra*. She wears necklaces, a *stanahāra*, and the other usual ornaments.

Varahi Next, on the right wall, are three more Mātṛikās (Pl. 134). The first of these is Vārāhī, who can be easily recognized by her boar face. She has an ugly form and looks emaciated. Her *sari* reaches down to her knees, and shows designs in vertical lines. Her waist-band has a diamond clasp, and she wears many bangles and other ornaments.

Kaumari Next to her is probably Kaumārī. This identity is suggested by the peacock-feather in her elongated crown. If she is Kaumārī, she is obviously occupying a position that was later on assigned to Aindri. This, however, need cause no surprise. Because even Chāmuṇḍā who accompanies her here is carved in the most unconventional manner. Kaumārī stands resting on her right foot, with the left leg bent. Her right hand is folded and placed on the right shoulder, while the left is on her left thigh. Her *sari* falls into horizontally slanting folds, while the *kachchha* shows vertical folds. The stance of Kaumārī is full of grace. The slight bend of the two legs and the movement of her torso a little to the right, plus the slight tilt of the head also to the right, lend charm to the figure. She wears a high crown and the other usual ornaments.

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Chamunda

Chāmuṇḍā who stands next to Kaumārī is portrayed here in the most unconventional manner. In other Mātṛikā slabs at Aihole, as in the Huchchimalli temple, she is given a skeletal appearance. Here she can hardly be distinguished from the other Mātṛikās. Her only distinguishing mark is the skull in her *mukuṭa*. Chāmuṇḍā is shown in a standing posture, with an upraised right hand, the left arm running in between her breasts to cross over to the knee of the right leg. The left breast is almost crushed by this pressure of the left arm. Her legs are parted as if for a dance, bent at the knees with the two heels almost touching each other. Her *sari* falls in vertical folds. Her smiling countenance is surprising, for Chāmuṇḍā should frown. She wears a high *mukuṭa*, many bangles and the other usual ornaments.

Mahishasurmardini

In the antechamber to the shrine, on the right wall (from the visitors' side), is a beautiful sculpture of Mahishāsurmardinī (Pl. 135). She continues the tradition of the Durgā temple, though not to the same extent. Her stance is extremely graceful, her *alīdhāsana* making her entire posture very attractive. The goddess stands heavily reclined on Mahishā. Her left leg is folded and pressed hard on the buffalo-demon, and under the weight of her leg, the buffalo appears crushed and helpless. With one left hand she holds the upraised head of the buffalo. She obviously seems to be in no hurry to kill the demon. For the *triśūla* and sword which she has in her two right hands are held downwards. In one right hand, which seems to be in the *tarjanī mudrā*, she carries a *Chakra*. One right hand makes a detour to the right to hold a parrot ever so delicately. All the right hands have been moved to the right to give balance to the body which is inclined leftward. The left hands move with natural grace. One left hand carries a conch and seems to be in the *kaṭaka-simhakarṇī mudrā*, another holds a shield, another a bow, while yet another is placed on the mouth of the demon. The buffalo looks strong and powerful, but against the power of Divinity, he is utterly helpless. The Goddess has a smiling face, which exudes her great confidence. She knows she can destroy the buffalo-demon with effortless ease. Her face shows her perfect composure. Her youthful body is strong and vigorous. The *mukuṭa* is not heavy and does not weigh her down, like the elongated *mukuṭas* that top the Mātṛikās in this cave. On the left of the Goddess is her lion vehicle. Besides the *mukuṭa* she wears the usual ornaments.

Varaha

On the left wall of the antechamber Varāha is shown standing in the *alīdhāsana*, with his left leg bent at the knee and thrust forward to rest on his toe (Pl. 136). This forward thrust of the leg has given an inclina-

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tion to his whole body. Even the right leg and his torso both show a forward movement. The lower left hand has moved forward to support the feet of Vasundharā, who is seated with great comfort on his folded upper left hand. His boar face touches the right hand and breast of Vasundharā. On the left of the latter is a conch. In the upper right hand, Varāha carries a Wheel while the left rests a little below the waist. The various limbs of Varāha are well-formed. His *kīriṭamukuṭa*, necklaces and pearl-*yajnopavīta* are very rich. The figure of Vasundharā is well carved. She is seated on the left hand of Varāha, with her right hand resting on it, while her left hand rests on the right lap. Her torso is turned towards Varāha, probably expressing gratitude. Near the feet of Varāha is seen a five-hooded *Nāga* with his consort. Both of them are in the attitude of adoration.

Sculptures on the ceiling of the antechamber

Three large circles are carved on the ceiling of the antechamber. The one on the right shows a winged Vishṇu on Garuḍa (Pl. 137). Vishṇu has four hands. In one right hand he holds a Wheel, while the other rests on his lap. In one left hand is carries a lotus, but the object in the other left hand is not clear. On two sides of Vishṇu are flying *gandharvas* carrying food-offerings. In the central circle is carved a big lotus medallion.

The circle on the left shows Indra on Airāvata flying through the clouds, carrying his royal burden (Pl. 138). On two sides of him are his *chaurī*-bearer attendants. On his left is probably Indrāṇī. A male figure is seen next to her and the halo behind his head is suggestive of his divinity.

Hall

On the plinth of the side chamber of the veranda-type hall are *gaṇas* carved in various funny postures.

The ceiling of the main hall is beautifully carved, the carvings greatly resembling those of Meena Basti, the Jain cave of Aihole (Pls. 139, 140).

MEENA BASTI

This is an interesting rock-cut Jain cave temple situated on the Meguti hill. Standing facing the south-west, it has a huge transverse veranda, 30′ in breadth and 6′ 4″ in depth, supported by four pillars and two pilasters that are square in section, are plain and have two-sided capitals. The ceiling of the veranda is beautifully carved with *swastika*

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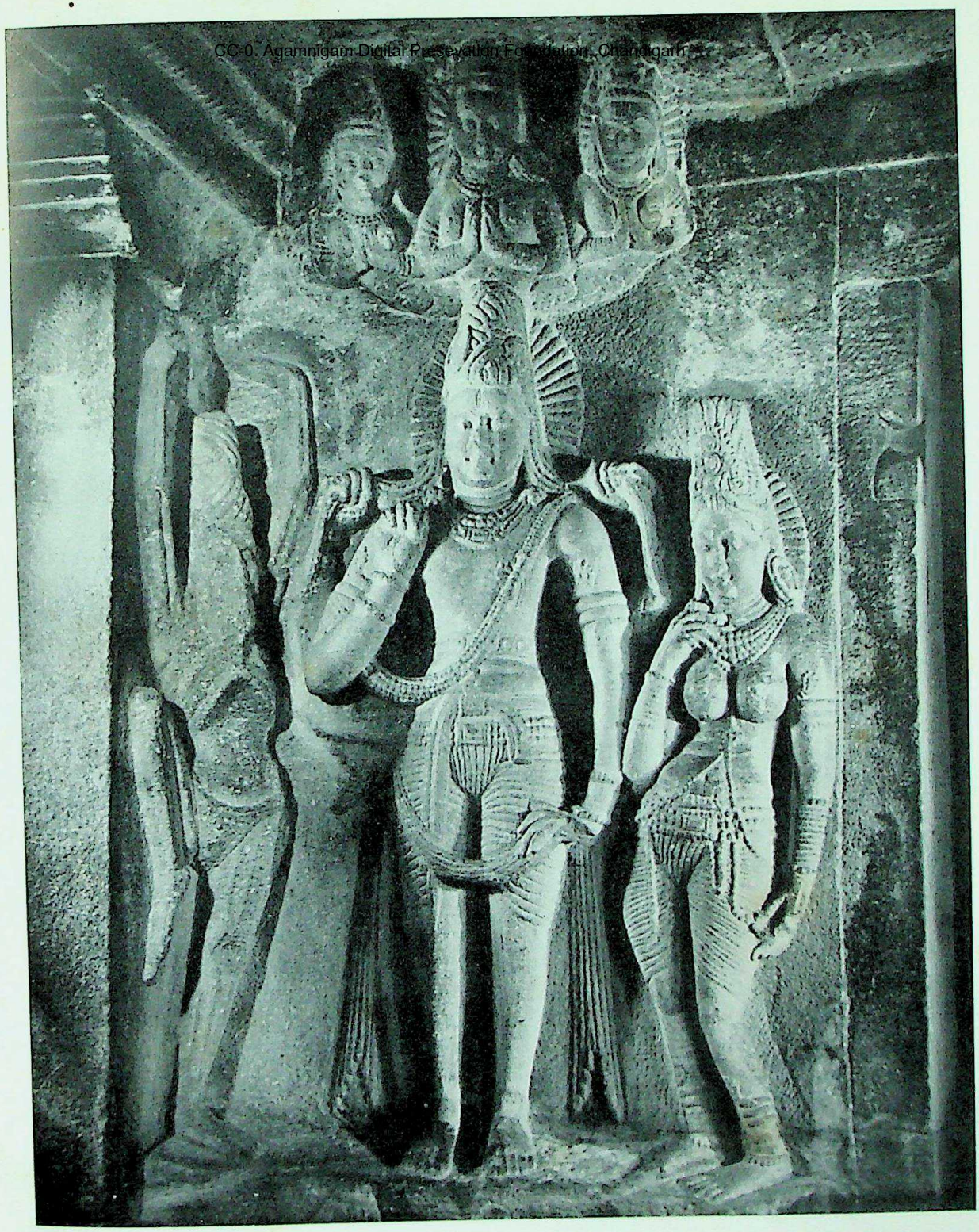

125. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Gangādhara-Śiva-Mūrti.

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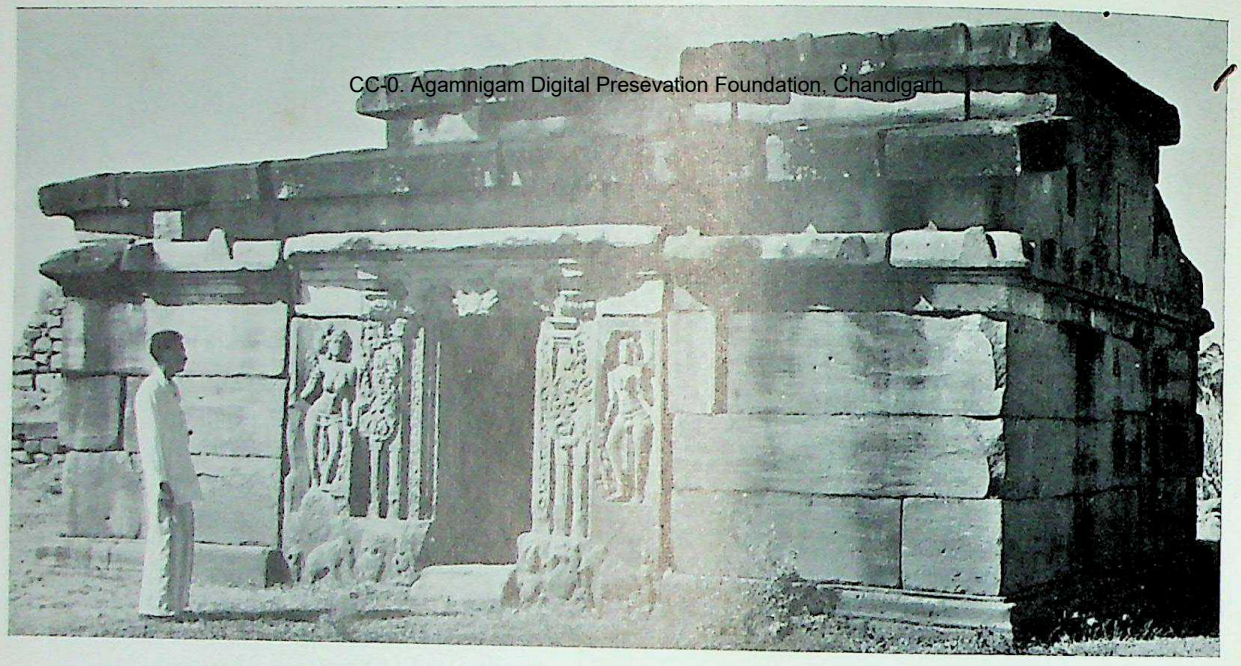

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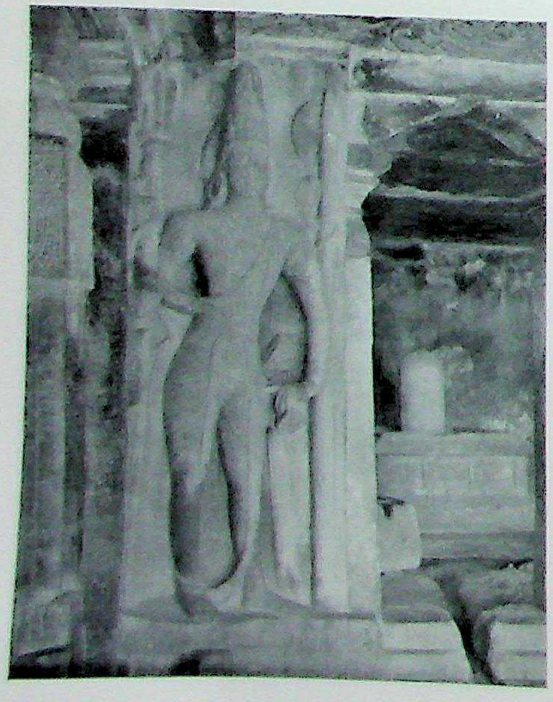
126. Hālibasappā temple. General view.
127. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Śiva as Dvarapāla.
128. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Śiva and Harihara.

128



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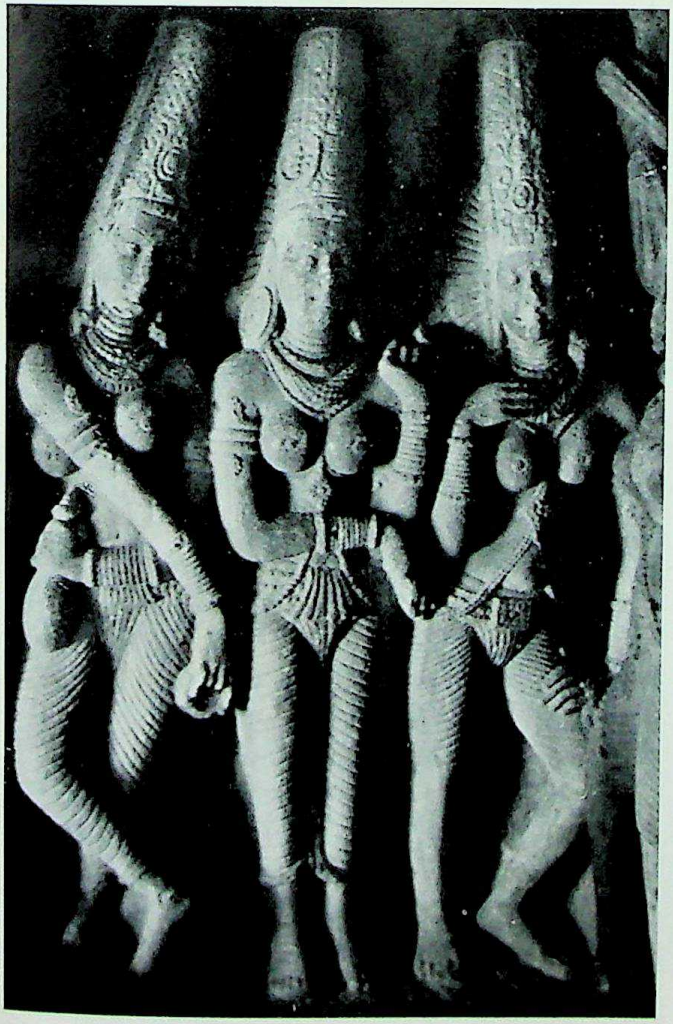
130. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. One of the Mātrikās, probably Kaumārī.



129. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. The Mātrikās.

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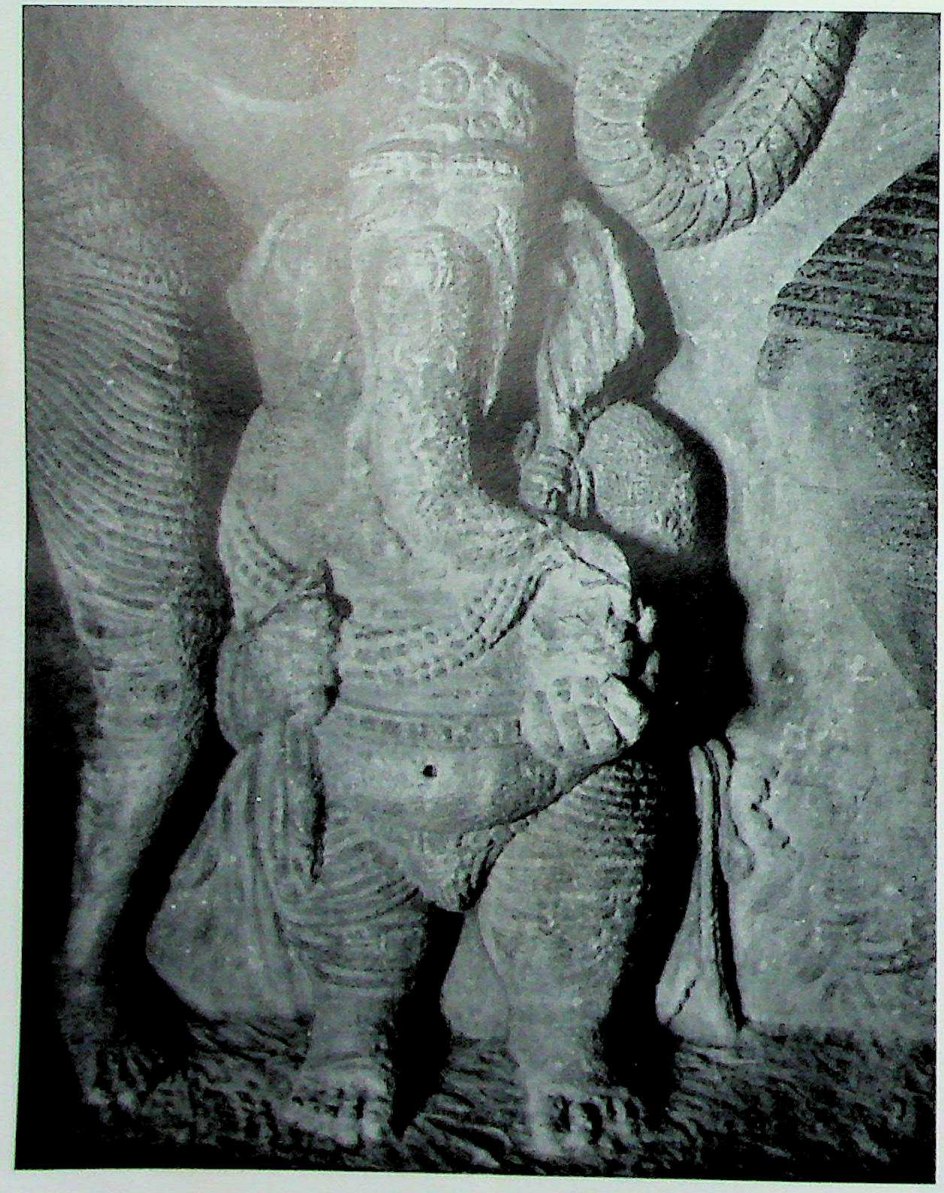
131. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Gaṇeśa.



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132. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Śiva dancing.

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133. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Parvati.
134. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Panel of Mātrikās.

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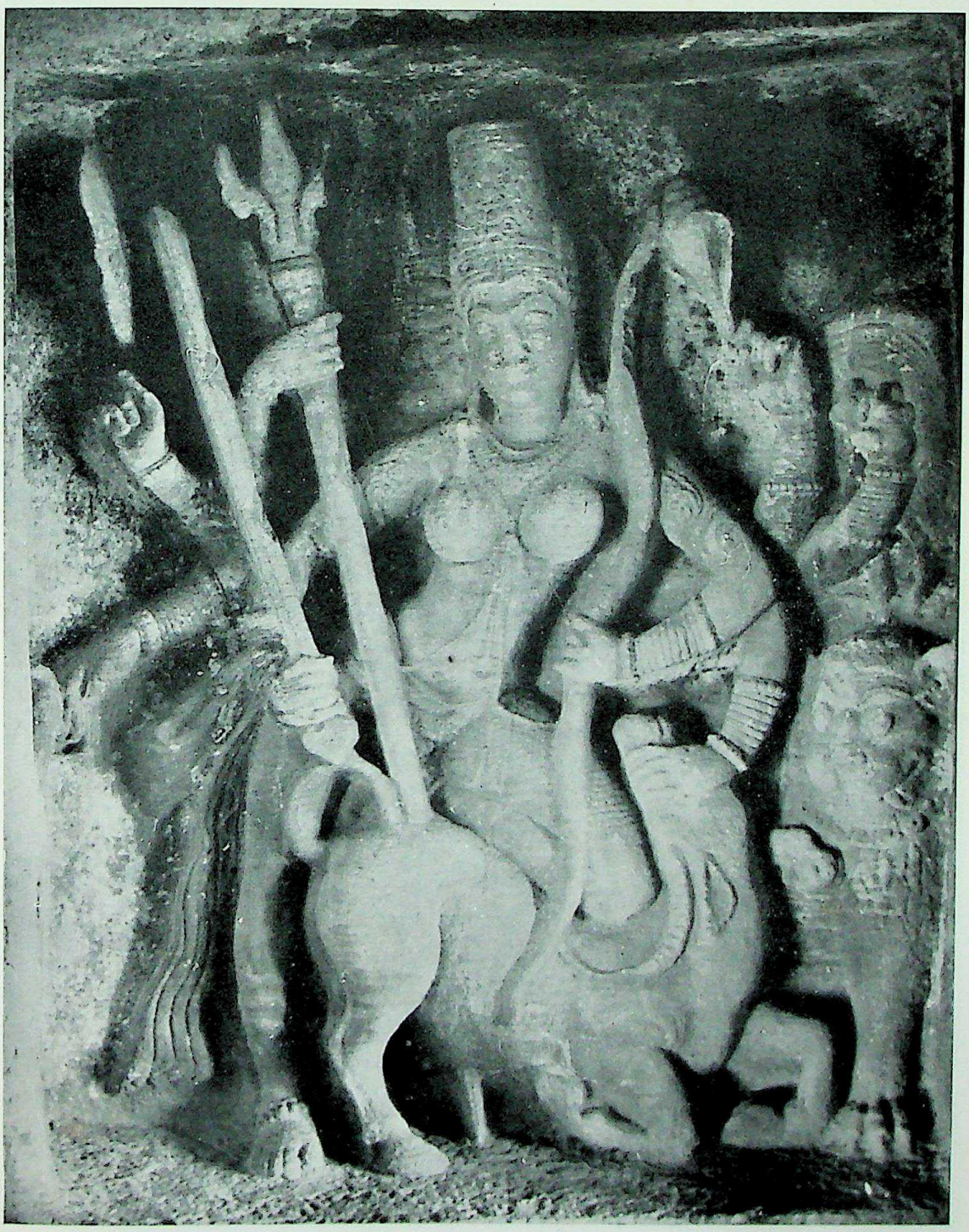

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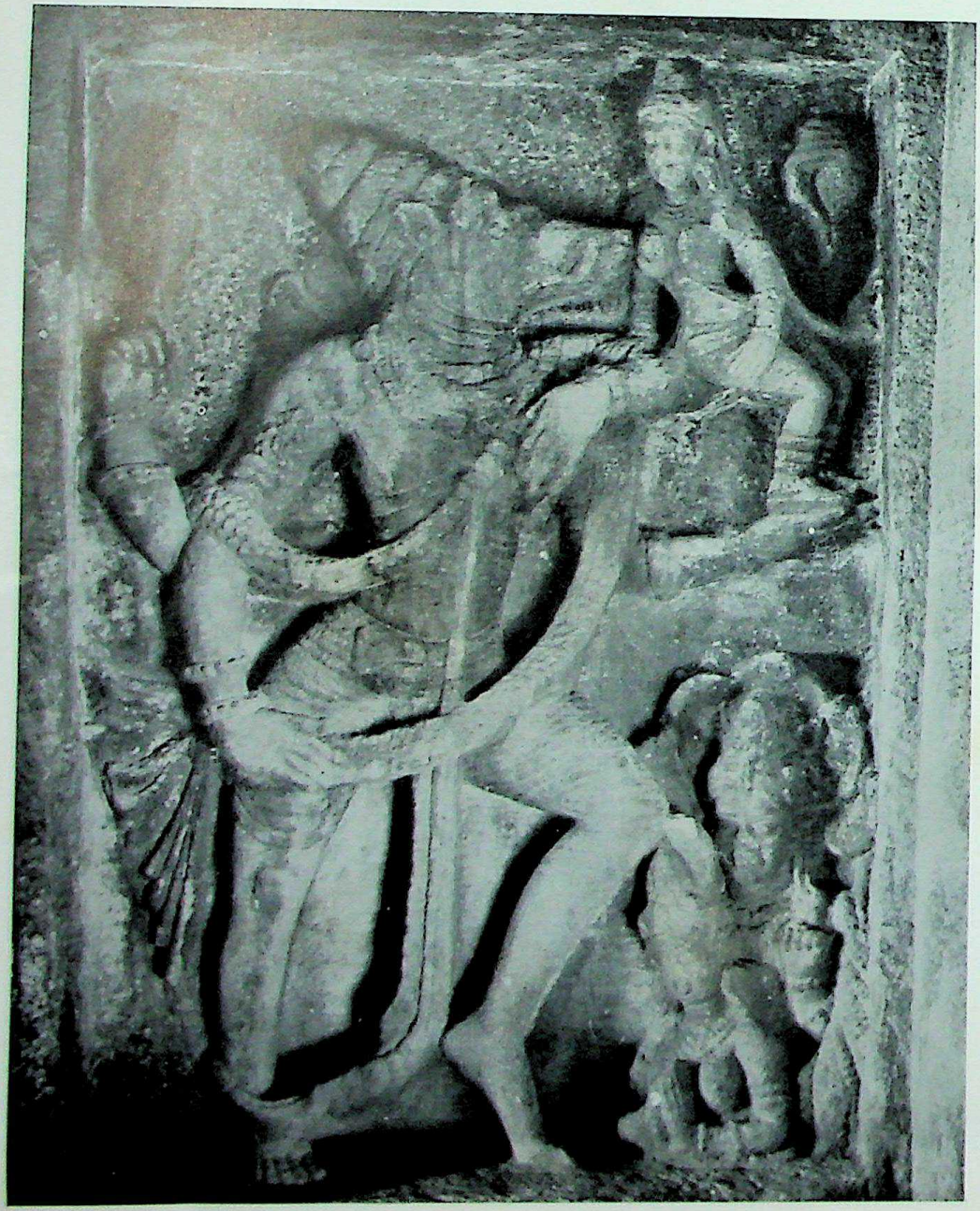
136. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Varāha.



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137. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Vishnu on Garuda.

138. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Indra on Airāvata.

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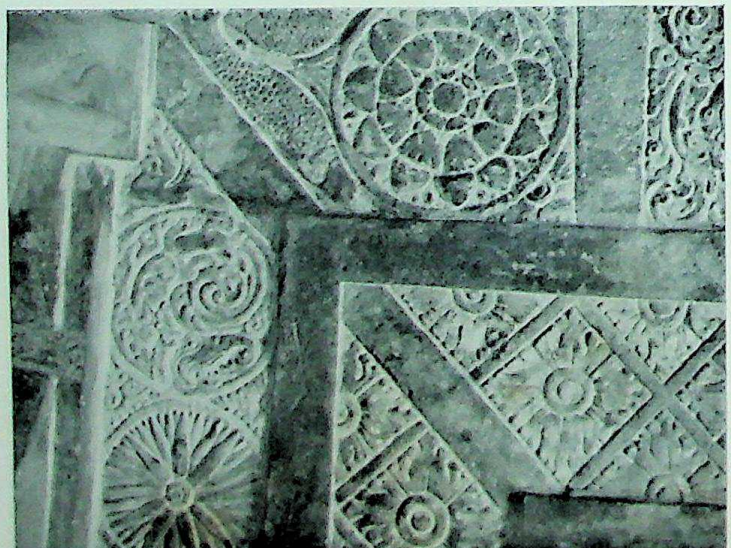
139

139. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Details of ceiling.
140. Rāvaṇa-Phadi. Details of ceiling. Another view.



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and leaf designs and lotuses. Human figures are seen emerging from *makara-mukhas*.

Gommateśvara

On the extreme right end is a beautiful sculpture of Gommateśvara, standing erect in the *Kayotsarga* pose, with creepers entwining his body. Two cobra heads are seen close to his legs and he is flanked on the sides by his sisters Brāhmī and Sundarī. The one on his right stands reclined on her left leg. Her right leg is bent at the knee. Her left hand holds the creeper which entwines Gommateśvara, while her right hand crosses across her abdomen to hold another creeper seen growing round his arm. She has a slim body but is well-built, wearing a decorative *mukuṭa*, a necklace, *stanahāra*, bangles, anklets, etc. Her nose is slightly damaged.

The sister on the left stands reclined on the right leg, with the left bent at the knee, and moved a little backwards. In her right hand she holds one of the creepers that goes round Gommateśvara's arm, while the left hand hangs freely by her side. She stands very gracefully with her handsome face slightly inclined to the right. She wears an elegant *mukuṭa* from which her beautiful hair seems to escape, and also the usual ornaments. Flying figures are seen above her.

Dharanendra

At the left end of the veranda is a figure of Dharanendra, the five-hooded serpent-friend of Pārśvanātha. There is a female figure on his right who stands holding an umbrella over his head, gracefully balanced on the left leg. From the *Nāga*-hood over her head it is obvious that she is a *Nāgiṇī*, probably the spouse of the *Nāga* who gives shelter to Pārśvanātha. Another *Nāgiṇī* is seen on the right, holding a lotus in the right hand. On the left of Pārśvanātha is the figure of a person adorned with princely ornaments, and seated in the *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* in an attitude of adoration. He wears a *mukuṭa*. Another figure with his hands upraised is seen on the left above Pārśvanātha. He also wears rich ornaments.

Pillars

The veranda leads to the central hall. There are two side chambers opening onto the two sides of the hall. The shrine is in the back wall. The pillars of the chambers and the shrine are of a uniform pattern. The base is squarish and shows lotus petals below. The base further up is square with lotus medallions and *makaras*. The shaft is fluted. It narrows as it travels upwards. Here it has an octagonal section, topped by an inverted *kalaśa*-form. Above is a squarish member topped by two-sided capitals.

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Main hall The main hall has a huge central lotus set inside a square. There are four more lotuses carved on the four sides of the ceiling, which also shows *makaras*, mermaids, fishes, etc. In the centre of the floor is a damaged lotus.

On the back wall of the hall are sculptures on the two sides of the shrine. The one on the left shows a male who stands resting on the right leg, with his left hand on the left lap and the right hand holding a lotus. He wears a *mukuṭa*, a necklace, and other ornaments and has a halo behind his head. On his left is a female dwarf holding offerings.

The male on the right stands majestically, inclined on the right leg, holding a beautiful lotus in the right hand, with his left resting on the left lap. He also has a halo. He wears a *mukuṭa* a pearl-*yajnopavīta* and the usual ornaments. On his right is a male dwarf holding in his right hand what may be a *kamaṇḍalu*.

Mahavira On the left side of the chamber on the back wall are carved a large number of sculptures. In the centre is a figure of Mahāvīra seated in *padmāsana* in *dhyāna mudrā* on a lion-throne. On his two sides below are seen *Nāgarājās* in attitudes of adoration. There are a number of figures carved on the right and left of Mahāvīra. There are also some interesting sculptures on the left wall of this chamber. There seems to be a procession of a *Rājā* and a *Rānī*, who are seated on an elephant. They are obviously going to offer worship to Mahāvīra. The elephant procession is preceded by two attendants of the king, one of whom is carrying a casket. Others are seen holding *chaurīs* or are in attitudes of adoration. One female figure is seen standing resting on her left leg, with the right leg bent at the knee. She has a *Nāga* armlet, and wears a *mukuṭa* and the other usual ornaments.

Rajas and Ranis

On the right side wall of this chamber is a king and queen, the former seated in the *ardhaparyaṅkāsana*. His left leg rests on the right lap of his queen. His right hand is placed on the crown while the left hand is on his lap. The *Rānī* is also seated in the *ardhaparyaṅkāsana* with her left hand in a *mudrā*. On two sides of the *Rājā* and *Rānī* are *chaurī*-bearer attendants, holding caskets in their hands. A female figure is seen standing reclined on the left leg, with her right hand hanging by the side and holding some object in the left. She wears a *mukuṭa* and other ornaments.

Shrine The shrine is entered through a flight of three steps. On the back wall on a lion-throne is Mahāvīra seated in the *padmāsana* in the *dhyāna mudrā*. Above him is a triple umbrella. On his two sides are *chaurī*-bearer attendants.

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THE SCULPTURE OF AIHOLE

The art of Aihole is obviously indigenous. The inspiration is primarily local. This is not to say that it was not influenced in any way at all by any earlier tradition. Art does not exist in a vacuum. The artist, as a social being, inherits a tradition.

The art of making images in stone was not new. In early Indian sculpture represented by the Parkham statute in the Patna Museum, and the Besnagar Yakshi, art had not yet realised the immense possibilities of the curved line and what it could do to mass. So these early figures were very angular and frontal. When, however, the Didarganj Yakshi was conceived and executed, the meaning and potentialities of the contour seemed much better understood. The use of the black polished stone made possible the rendering of a luminous plastic surface, and through it a more sensitive rendering of the living flesh. More than this, the way in which use of the contour was made was very striking. The curved line used with imagination can very effectively give life and form to the beautiful female form. The Didarganj Yakshi is very curvacious. Though she is conceived more than life-size and is massive of proportion, this is offset by the great beauty of her form. The planes of her curvacious body melt into each other gracefully. The big, well-rounded and firm breasts, the attenuated waist, the broad hips and the shapely legs are all beautifully rendered, making the Yakshi look very sensuous and sensual.

Didarganj Yakshi

The tradition represented by the Didarganj Yakshi obviously did not become general. At Bharhut, the human figures which appear in a general scheme of vegetation, ill-fit a scheme of curves and linear rhythm represented by the 'plant or creeper style.' For one, they are very angular and frontal. The Sanchi gateways show a number of tree-goddesses or dryads in various kinds of postures and attitudes. They are seen holding the trunk of some tree and swinging their bodies in playful attitudes. They are embodiment of Energy, which they impart to the trees and make them blossom. The Sanchi artist had obviously mastered the use of the contour, and was therefore successful in giving their form an elegant grace in movement. These dryads are very much of this earth and have great earthly charm.

Bharhut

Sanchi

In the early art of Mathura, when the concept of the Eternal was for the first time conceived in anthropomorphic form, and became the chief theme of art, new problems appeared. To these the artist had no solution. Apart from the lack of technical skill, it was also the result of an inability to understand the concept of Divinity. Without such an

Mathura

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understanding, the problem of giving it plastic form could not be solved. The early images of Buddha fail completely to convey the idea of Divinity. It was a failure both of technique and imagination. Later on, under the pervasive influence of Sarnath, the art of Mathura began to get transformed. Though Mathura sculpture retained its heaviness, a great transformation was effected in the entire composition of the image. It became integrated and held together by a disciplined energy that came from within. The transformation in the face was striking. The drooping eyes focussed on the tip of the nose, the sensitive rendering of the face which seemed so introspective effected a change that was very remarkable. It succeeded in expressing in plastic terms the idea of the Eternal, the Absolute.

Sarnath

It was the Sarnath school, however, which created the perfect Buddha image. The Gupta artist of Sarnath was in every sense a creative artist. No copyist could have created the kind of Buddha image such as he created. He had understood the idea of Divinity. He had the intellect and the imagination required for the comprehension of the abstract idea of God. He was conscious of the fact that he was trying to give form to the formless Infinite. And yet this formless could be given form only through the use of the form familiar to the human devotee. He used the human form as a tool of his art. This was only the material he was using to render in visible form the concept of the invisible Infinite, Isvara. Since he was using the human form as an instrument of his art, he had the liberty to change and modify it to suit his purpose. He was using the human body merely as a vehicle to convey the abstract idea of Isvara. His purpose then was not to create the physical likeness of a male figure. He was conceiving God not in physical terms, but in terms of the idea of the One Eternal. The form, therefore, had to be changed to suit his purpose. He did this by giving the body a smooth, sensitive and luminous surface. To some, this form might seem effeminate, but since the form served the purpose by making the body glow with spiritual energy, the criticism becomes irrelevant. The Sarnath Buddha, with his luminous and slightly conceived sensitive body and a very thoughtful face very sensitively rendered, most effectively conveyed the idea of Isvara, the One Eternal. This is what makes the Gupta artist creative. He had the intellect, the imagination and the technical skill required for giving plastic form to the idea of Divinity. This is what makes Gupta art intellectual. The abstract idea of the Infinite is comprehended and beautifully expressed in plastic form.

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Aihole

The art of Aihole is mostly contemporaneous with the classical period of Gupta art of the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. But it is largely indigenous. In the best of circumstances, influences on art forms can only be in the nature of conjectures. Since the art of Aihole is native to the soil, it is bound to be different than art elsewhere. The plastic tradition here was different. It is not really a case of a 'feebly expressed Gupta classicism' as Prof. Saraswati puts it (*A Survey of Indian Sculpture*). It is just that the tradition owes little to the Guptas. It was just another tradition, with its roots in the native soil. It suggests some relationship with the sculptures of the gateways of Sanchi, with the voluptuous forms of Vengi and Amaravati, and also with some of the sensuous forms of the Mathura school. But this is not a direct relationship. The linearism of Aihole sculptures is all its own. Here the contour is used with imagination and dramatic effect. Under the sensitive touch of the Aihole artist, the surface becomes extremely pliant. The various planes of the body melt very gracefully and naturally into one another. The modelling of the body is very sensitive. It has a rhythm which comes from the lyrical rendering of the entire organism. The slender and elongated body has striking grace and elegance. The movements that the body makes are very rhythmic. The form is very dignified. The sculptures have bearing, poise and balance. Sometimes as in the Durga temple (Siva reclining on his vehicle Bull and Vishnu on the Man-Eagle) the imaginative plastic rendering of the physical form is matched by an extremely sensitive face that shows introspection. The energy of the lithe moving body seems to come from within and lend the entire figure a sense of internal calm. In other cases, it lacks this spirituality, and the rendering becomes more physical as in the sculptures of the erotic couples which crowd the pillars of Durga and most other temples. Here the purpose of art is different. The artist is not trying to convey the idea of Divinity. He is merely trying to render the female form in all its inherent charm. Indian sculpture reveals two traditions—one religious, the other secular. As Prof. Basham puts it (*The Wonder that was India*), one tradition came from the Brahmins, the monks and the philosophers. The other came from the body of secular craftsmen. While the former were interested in the life hereafter, the latter were very much interested in this mundane world, to which they were very much attached. The artist liked this world of form, and in this material universe, it was the form of the woman that fascinated him most. And so when he delineated the female figure, he became very much engrossed in his subject and treated every nuance of the beautiful female form very delicately and very caressingly. He knew

Traditions

Female form

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the female form and was very familiar with it, and so when he rendered this form in terms of volume and contour, he rendered it with great love and treated every graceful curve of the naturally curvacious female anatomy with great sensitiveness. This was how he liked his woman to be and so he gave the female form a lyrical rhythm which belongs to the plant and the creeper. His woman moves with grace, poise and dignity. He likes to see her in various attitudes and postures. From whatever angle he looks at her, her natural curves hold him spell-bound. He likes his woman to have full, well-rounded and firm breasts, a slender waist, broad hips and shapely legs. In the process of creating the woman of his dreams, he forgets himself and creates an idealised female form of great swaying curves (standing, sitting or reclining or in playful gestures) in its native dignity and poise. It is this tradition which is represented at Aihole.

Aihole then represents both the traditions of Indian art, the religious and the secular. Art here does not soar to the spiritual heights of Sarnath, but it has a lyrical charm all its own.

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GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL WORDS

Abhaya : The gesture of protection. In this hand-pose, the palm of the hand is fully open and the fingers point upwards. The palm faces the onlooker.

Adisesha : God Vishnu.

Ahavaniya fire : The Vedic Fire Altar has three fire-altars. Of these, the one on the east-west line on the eastern side is the Ahavaniya Fire and is square in shape. It denotes the heaven-world. All other Fires are lighted from this celestial fire.

Airavata : The name of Indra's elephant. He is the vehicle of Indra, the king of the Gods.

Akhsamala : Rosary of beads, which is of two types, (1) Rudraksha, and (2) Kamalaksha. The rosary is usually found in the hands of Brahma, Sarasvati and Siva. Sometimes it is found with other divinities also.

Alidhasana : A particular asana, or attitude of legs, in all respects similar to the attitude adopted in drawing the bow. The right leg is outstretched while the left is slightly bent. The attitude should be distinguished from the Pratyalidha attitude in which case the left leg is outstretched while the right is slightly bent and placed behind.

Amalaka and *Amalaka-sila :* Flat-fluted melon-shaped member usually at the summit of a pillar or the spire of the temple.

Ankusa-dhvaja : Flag hoisted on an elephant-goad.

Antarala : Antechamber leading to the shrine.

Ardha-mandapa : Half-pavilion.

Ardha-paryankasana : Also called Maharajalila, is a sitting pose. Both the legs are on the same pedestal; one of the knees is raised while the other is bent in the usual position of the Buddha. This attitude should be distinguished from the Lalitasana in which case one of the legs is pendant, while the other is bent in the usual position of a Buddha. When both legs are pendant, the attitude is called Bhadrasana.

Asana : The word in Sanskrit may mean a seat or an attitude exhibited in the lower limbs. The word Padmasana means the seat of lotus. Similarly, Simhasana means any easy attitude of sitting. It may be the Paryankasana, the Lalitasana or the Ardha-paryankasana. In fact, in the Sadhanamala, the word Sukhasana is not used in a technical sense. When used in a technical sense asana is of various kinds, such as the Paryankasana, Vajraparyankasana, Lalitasana, Ardha-paryankasana, Bhadrasana, Alidhasana, Pratyalidhasana, etc.

Asta-dikpala-pata : The Asta-dikpalas are the Guardians of the Directions. These are : Indra—East, Agni—South-East, Yama—South; Nirti—South-West; Varuna—West; Vayu—North-West; Kubera—North; and Isana—North-East. The Asta-dikpala-pata is a panel showing these eight Guardians of the Quarters.

Asvamedha : Horse-sacrifice.

Atibhanga : Body bent at many places.

Bhumi : The storey of the Southern or Dravida pyramidal spire. The spire is built over the shrine. Each such storey is surrounded by a rampart or enclosure composed of chapels.

Brahmacharin : Bachelor, the first stage in the life of a male.

Chaitya : Stupa.

Chakra : Wheel or Disc. It is the characteristic symbol of the Hindu God Vishnu or his incarnation Krishna.

Chandra : Moon.

Chauri-bearer : Fly-whisk bearer.

Damaru : Small drum such as is carried by the Hindu God Siva.

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Danda : Staff or mace.
Devakosthas : Panel for the reception of sculpture.
Dharani : Meaningless conglomeration of syllables.
Dharmachakra mudra : The gesture of teaching the Doctrine of Law. This was the hand-pose used by the Buddha while preaching the Law. In this, the two hands are raised before the chest.
Dhyani mudra : The position of hands while in meditation. The hands with palms upwards lie one upon the other on the lap with all fingers stretched.
Dholaka : A large drum, necessary as accompaniment for classical and folk dances.
Dhoti : A garment used by males. It is worn around the waist, is passed under and tucked behind.
Digvijaya : Universal conquest undertaken usually with a view to perform the horse-sacrifice ceremony, which is indicative of Universal Supremacy.
Dikpala : A regent of a Quarter. These are eight in number.
Drona-patra : A bowl made of leaves.
Dvibhanga : Body bent at two places.
Dvarapala : Door-guardian.

Ekavali : A simple one-stringed pearl necklace.

Gana : A dwarf follower of Siva. The chief of the ganas is Ganesa.
Gandharvas : They are angels or demi-gods. They live in the sky.
Garbhagriha : The sanctum sanctorum, the shrine.
Garuda : Eagle. Supposed to be the destroyer of all serpents. Vehicle of Vishnu.
Ghanta : Bell.
Ghata-pallava : Vase-cum-foliage. It is the bowl of plenty and is symbolic of prosperity.
Gopuram : The entrance gateway of a South Indian temple. Like the spire of a temple, it has a broad base and becomes pointed as it rises to its pinnacle, which is pointed. It is filled with sculptures of gods and goddesses, apsaras, and mythical animals.

Hamsa : The goose. The vehicle of Brahma.
Hiranyagarbha-mahadana : A sacrifice performed by kings.

Jali : Grille.
Jatamukuta : It is made up of matted hair done in the form of a tall cap. Five jatas or braids are taken and tied into a knot 3" in height by coiling them into one or three loops, the remaining braids being bound and taken through to be left hanging on both sides.

Kachchha : Sari with plaits tucked behind at the waist.
Kakshasana : Balustrade wall with seats provided. This is usually in the entrance hall which is open on three sides.
Kalasa : Water-pitcher. Generally used by Brahma.
Kamandalu : A vessel to hold water. Generally used by ascetics.
Kamarapatta : waist-belt.
Kantha : Necklace.
Karanda-mukuta : Crown made in the shape of a Karanda. It is short in height and small in size. It is worn by subordinate gods and goddesses.
Kataka-simhakarna mudra : In this hand-pose, the tips of all the fingers touch the tip of the thumb to form a circle.
Kinnara, Kinnari : Male and female celestial musicians. Their upper half is human, male or female, and the lower half is horse or bird.
Kiritamukuta : A conical cap sometimes ending in an ornamental top carrying a central pointed knob. It is covered with jewelled-discs in front or on all sides, and has jewelled bands round the top as well as the bottom. It is worn exclusively by Vishnu.

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Kirti-mukha : The Face of Glory, a manifestation of the terrible aspect of god.
Kundalas : A general name for ear-ornaments.
Kudu motifs : Chaitya decoration with human heads carved inside. This is used as a decorative motif in temple architecture.

Laddu : A favourite food of Ganesa. It is round in shape and sweet.
Linga : The phallus symbol of Siva. According to some, the hemispherical top of Siva linga consists in reality of thousands of heads, each of the size of a point. The sides of the cylindrical figure are equally true representations of the thousands of eyes, hands and faces. The circular bottom is similarly representative of a thousand feet ; the semi-circular top, resembling the visible horizon, is truly symbolical of the Universe which surrounds the universe on all sides. Thus the Siva linga is the closest possible approximation to the cosmic Purusha.

Maharajadhiraja : Emperor. Great King or King of Kings.
Makara : A mythical animal with a crocodile face.
Makara-torana : A decorative arch with the makara used for decoration.
Mandapa : A pavilion or a hall.
Man-garuda : Man-Eagle. Sometimes the eagle, which is the vehicle of the God Vishnu, is shown in human form with wings.
Mani-mekhala : A waist-band of pearls.
Mani-yajnopavita : Sacred thread of pearls worn round the neck. It rests on the right shoulder and the neck and passes through the left armpit.
Mayura : Peacock. The peacock is the vehicle of the Saivite god Karttikeya. It is also associated with Sarasvati.
Mithuna figures : Amorous couples. Used as a decorative motif to adorn door-jambs.
Mridanga : A kind of drum used as accompaniment for dancing.
Mukuta : Crown.
Mukhamandapa : Entrance hall leading to the main hall.

Naga : Serpent.
Nagini : Female serpent.
Namaskara mudra : Hands folded before the chest to show respect or to pay obeisance.
Narayana : Vishnu.

Padmasana : Lotus-seat. It is round in shape.
Palidhvaja : The flag of the Chalukyas. A symbol of supremacy.
Parasu : Battle-axe. It consists of a steel blade fitted to a wooden handle.
Paramabhattaraka : Devotee of Vishnu. Title used by Vaishnavite kings.
Paramesvara : Devotee of Siva. Title used by Saivite kings.
Pasa : A noose of ropes employed in binding the hands and legs of the enemies. It is represented in sculpture as consisting of two or three ropes made into a single or double loop.
Paryankasana : Dhyanasana. Sitting cross-legged in a meditative pose.
Phalakahara : A necklace with a phalaka or a rectangular diamond at the centre.
Pradaksina : Circumambulatory passage.
Pradaksina patha : Same as above.
Prasasti : Panegyric.
Pratyalidha asana : See under *Asana*.
Purnakalasa : A full pitcher, the symbol of plenty and prosperity.
Pushpa-yajnopavita : Sacred thread of flowers worn round the neck.

Sabhamandapa : Main hall of the temple.

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Samabhanga : Standing erect.
Sankha : Conch.
Santhagara : An assembly hall. In the ancient Indian republics, the Sabha or Assembly met in the Santhagara.
Sari : The Indian costume, which is worn round the waist and tucked up there.
Saptamatrikas : The Seven Divine Mothers. These were worshipped by the Chalukyas as protectors of their dynasty. They claimed to have been nourished by them. They are said to have been created by Siva. Their worship became very popular.
Savyalalitasana : The sitting position in which the left leg is left hanging below.
Sikhara : The spire of the temple. It is usually built above the shrine.
Simha-mukha : The lion-mouth. Used as a decorative motif on armlets and waist-band.
Silpasastra : Science of sculpture.
Sruk : A spoon used for taking out ghee from a ghee-pot and for pouring it into the sacrificial fire. It is round in shape.
Sruv : A spoon, oval in shape. It is also used for a sacrificial purpose.
Stambha : Pillar.
Stanahara : Breast-necklace. It is worn round the neck, but passes between the breasts, to rest on the navel.
Sthapaka : The Priest-Architect.
Swastika : A sacred Hindu, Buddhist and Jain symbol.

Taksaka : Sculptor.
Tandava : Siva's cosmic dance.
Tarjani mudra : The hand-pose used to frighten a person or to keep him quiet. The forefinger is kept pointing upwards as also the thumb. The other three fingers are closed.
Tribhanga : Body bent at three places.
Trisula : The trident of Siva.
Trisuladhvaja : Flag hoisted on a trident.

Urdhvalinga : Erect phallus.
Utpala : Blue lotus.

Vama-lalitasana : A sitting position in which the right leg is folded and kept on the seat and the left leg is left hanging below.
Varaha-lancchana : The boar-crest. This was used as their symbol by the Chalukyas of Badami, signifying that even as the God Vishnu in the form of Varaha (boar) lifted the Earth Goddess from the Darkness of the Primeval Waters, and brought it out, so the Chalukyas brought to the earth prosperity and plenty.
Vara mudra : The hand-pose of boon-giving.
Vastusastra : The science of architecture.
Vastuvidya : The science of architecture.
Vidyadharas : Angels whose abode is the sky.
Vitarka mudra : It is the Dharmachakra mudra. In this hand-pose, the thumb and the index finger are joined to form a ring, while the rest of the fingers are kept open along with the palm.
Vyaghra-chamara : Tiger-skin.
Vrishabha-vahana : The vehicle Bull.

Yali : A mythical animal, half-horse, half-lion.
Yab-yum : A Tibetan word consisting of two particles, Yab-yum. The word Yab in Tibetan means the 'honourable father,' and Yum means the 'honourable mother.' The combined word therefore means the father in the company of the mother or in her embrace.
Yoni : The female sex-organ.

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